

COK-H05005-3-P015905

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

052

GENERAL INDEX TO VOLUME 48, 1955

016/45

	Page
Alexander Baron, by A. C. Jones	150-2
Announcements:	
<i>The Case of Fred Bloggs, Mechanic</i>	41
G.L.D. Revision School	41
Leeds School of Librarianship Old Students' Association	149
Newbattle, Abbey Summer School	41
Periodicals for disposal	145
S.C.E.L. "Notes for tutors"	149
Ash, L., <i>Correspondence</i> : New York Library Club	108-9
Association of Assistant Librarians:	
Annual General Meeting, 1955	27, 68, 82, 112
Annual Report, 1954	62-7
Conference, 1955	41, 83-7, 111
<i>Correspondence</i> , 45, 109, 144.	
Conference, 1956	179, 187
<i>Correspondence courses</i>	32, 82, 130, 134
Council Notes	7-10, 42-3, 87-9, 113-5, 117-8
Dance at Southport	138, 149
Diamond jubilee, 1895-1955 (Special issue)	49-80
Election of National Councillors for 1955	10
<i>Correspondence</i> , 30-1, 129.	
"The future of the A.A.L." (A symposium)	69-80
<i>Correspondence</i> , 107-8, 142-4, 157-9.	
Hon. Education and Sales Officer	44, 107
Notice of election	163
Officers, 1955	1, 65, 134
Opportunities for service	81-2
Presidential address, by J. S. Bristow	101-6
<i>Correspondence</i> , 141-2, 157-8.	
Presidential New Year Letter	1
Publications	44, 185
Round the Divisions	15, facing p. 25, 118-20, 130-2, 183-4
Who's who in the A.A.L., 1-3	10, 53, 163
Atkinson, F. Ein Kleiner Nachtmahr	35-6
Banks, P. J., <i>Correspondence</i> : Junior assistant	95
Benjamin, R. G., <i>Correspondence</i> : L.A. motion	191-3
Binder, Jean, <i>Correspondence</i> : Meetings	5-6, 98
Bontoft, G. J., <i>Correspondence</i> : Meetings	45-6
Boys in green, by Alan Glencross	189-90
Bristow, J. S., Presidential address	101-6
<i>Correspondence</i> , 157-8.	
Presidential New Year letter	1
Bulmer, L., <i>Correspondence</i> : <i>Correspondence courses</i>	110
Chapman, A., <i>Correspondence</i> : Indexes	98-100
Chapman, E., <i>Correspondence</i> : Meetings	45
Chapman, E. W., <i>Correspondence</i> : Plain words	160
Chapman Mortimer, by A. P. Shearman	164-8
Chivers, Fay, Logical classification or A life of Bliss	186-7

Q15905

	Page
* Clearwater, Thomas, <i>pseud.</i> see Revaluations.	
Clough, E. A., <i>Correspondence</i> : The future of the A.A.L.	107
Coates, E. J., <i>Correspondence</i> : Classification	4-5, 48
Collins, B. J., <i>Correspondence</i> : The future of the A.A.L.	108
Collison, R. L., <i>Correspondence</i> : Filing and storage of special materials	6
<i>Correspondence</i> :	
A.A.L. and NALGO	142-4, 158, 176
Blacklisted posts	6-7
Cataloguing rules	5, 31, 46-8, 96-7
Charles Nowell Memorial Fund	144-5
Classification	4-5, 48, 97-8
Correspondence courses	93-5, 110
An external degree?	4
Filing and storage of special materials	6
Fines	6, 30
Ideas on teaching	2-3, 31-2
Indexes	98-100
Meetings	5-6, 45-6, 98
New York Library Club	108-9
Primer of work with young people	109, 145
The private press	4
Public relations	191
Typography	196
Cotton, G. B., Thomas Wolfe	135-8
<i>Correspondence</i> . 176.	
Crossey, J. M. D., <i>Correspondence</i> : Junior assistant	95-6
Cuerden, Miss C., <i>Correspondence</i> : Cataloguing rules	96-7
Curwen, A. G., <i>Correspondence</i> : Cataloguing rules	97
Dain, N., <i>Correspondence</i> : Blacklisted posts	6-7
Dane, C., <i>Psychology in the library</i>	20-23
Display discussion	170-3
<i>Correspondence</i> . 191.	
Downton, Jane A., <i>Correspondence</i> : Charles Nowell Memorial Fund	144-5
Dunn, A., <i>Correspondence</i> : Typography	196
Editorial	33-4, 49, 81-2, 121, 133, 149, 169, 185
Ein Kleiner Nachtmahr, by Frank Atkinson	35-6
English and German libraries: a comparison, by W. Reuter	125-6
Examination Comments, Winter, 1954.	Suppl. between pp. 24 & 25
Summer, 1955.	Suppl. between pp. 152 & 153
Examinations don't matter? by Sheila N. White	153
Firth, Joan, <i>Correspondence</i> : Learning and librarianship	2
Foskett, D. J., <i>Correspondence</i> : Junior assistant	95, 145
Francis, L. S., <i>Correspondence</i> : Display	109
Fransella, Peggy, Not to have read "Middlemarch"	90
Gardner, F. M., <i>Correspondence</i> : Presidential address	141-2
Gerard, D. E., <i>Correspondence</i> : An external degree?	4
Glencross, A., Boys in green	190
Greenwood Library for Librarians, by A. L. Smyth	122-4
Halls, Catharine, The School of Librarianship and Archives	174-5
Harrison, D., Return match	140
Hartley, C. M., <i>Correspondence</i> : Correspondence courses	93-4
Hope, D. S., <i>Correspondence</i> : The future of the A.A.L.	158-9
<i>Correspondence</i> : Ideas on teaching	3
Horne, L. B., <i>Correspondence</i> : "Talking about reading"	160
Howes, J. R., <i>Correspondence</i> : Display	191
Hoy, R. J., The future of the A.A.L.	74-6
Hutchings, F. G. B., The future of the A.A.L.	69-70
I kept my English accent, by Monica O. Webster	23-5

	Page
"Icarius," <i>pseud.</i> , Observations on the novel problem	111
Ingram, B. R., A peep behind the scenes	187-8
Jones, A. C., Alexander Baron	150-2
Jones, A. D., <i>Correspondence</i> : Junior assistant	44-5
Jepson, Daphne M., <i>Correspondence</i> : Presidential address	141
Lamb, J. P., <i>Correspondence</i> : Commercial and technical libraries	160-1
Lancashire, N., <i>Correspondence</i> : Ideas on teaching	31-2
Library Association:	
Annual General Meeting, 1955	179-81
<i>Correspondence</i> , 191-4	
Conference, 1955 (A.A.L. Session)	181-3
Examinations, Winter, 1954: tutors' comments. Suppl. between pp. 24 & 25	
Summer, 1955: tutors' comments. Suppl. between pp. 152 & 153	
Library	10, 41
Logical classification, or A life of Bliss, by Fay Chivers	186-7
Lyle, R. M., <i>Correspondence</i> : A.A.L. and NALGO	176
Milton, L. E., <i>Correspondent</i> : The future of the A.A.L.	142-4
Moon, E. E., <i>Correspondence</i> : Junior assistant	110
Mortimore, A. D., The welcome wagon	39-40
Morton, Catherine R., <i>Correspondence</i> : Cataloguing rules	5
Munck af Rosenschöld, Kerstin, Swedish libraries and librarianship	11-14
Moxey, E. W., <i>Correspondence</i> : The future of the A.A.L.	158
Not to have read "Middlemarch," by Peggy Fransella	90
Observations on the novel problem, by "Icarius"	111
Paton, W. B., Our library schools	91-2
<i>Correspondence</i> , 117-8.	
Pearce, Mary, <i>Correspondence</i> : Fines	30
Peep behind the scenes, by B. R. Ingram	187-8
Place of the junior assistant in public libraries, by Marion Wilden-Hart	17-20
<i>Correspondence</i> , 44-5, 95-6, 110, 145. Note, 41	
Pocklington, P. D., The future of the A.A.L.	76-80
<i>Correspondence</i> : National elections	30-1
Professional meeting in the U.S.A., by Lucie R. Stone	25-7
Psychology in the library, by Chase Dane	20-3
Reed, E. O., <i>Correspondence</i> : Cataloguing rules	96
Reformer's nightmare, by H. A. Whatley	146-8
Return match, by Dean Harrison	140
Reuter, W., English and German libraries	125-6
Revaluations IX, by "Thomas Clearwater"	37-9
<i>Correspondence</i> , 91, 117-8	
Reviews:	
Books and bookmen	179
Esdaile, A., <i>Student's manual of bibliography</i>	128-9
Hunt, K. G., <i>Subject specialization and co-operative book purchase in the libraries of Great Britain</i>	153-4
Lamb, J. P., <i>Commercial and technical libraries</i>	154-6
<i>Correspondence</i> , 160-1	
Library Association, <i>Books for young people, group II, eleven to thirteen plus</i>	128
Library Trends, v. 3, No. 3	127
Ottervik, G., Möhlenbrock, S. and Andersson, I., <i>Libraries and archives in Sweden</i>	127-8
Piggott, Mary, ed., <i>Cataloguing principles and practice: an inquiry</i>	28-9
Thomson, Jean, ed., <i>Books for boys and girls</i>	29-30
Thornton, S. L., and Tully, R.I.J., <i>Scientific books, libraries and collectors</i>	28
Salond, Josephine I., <i>Correspondence</i> : The future of the A.A.L.	107-8
Sampson, P. C. F., <i>Correspondence</i> : Junior assistant	95
Sayers, W. C. B., Some jubilee memories and reflections	50-3

	Page
School of Librarianship and Archives, by Catharine Halls - - -	174-5
Correspondence, 194-6.	
Scottish Library Association Summer School, July 2-9, by Sheila White -	162
Sharp, H. A., <i>Correspondence: Cataloguing rules</i> - - - -	46-8
Sherman, A. P., Chapman Mortimer - - - -	164-8
— <i>Correspondence: Fines</i> - - - -	6
Sleightholm, M. T., <i>Correspondence: Public relations</i> - - - -	191
Smyth, A. L., The Greenwood Library for Librarians - - - -	122-4
Some jubilee memories and reflections, by W. C. Berwick Sayers -	50-3
Spicer, E. J., <i>Correspondence: The welcome wagon</i> - - - -	100
Stewart, Christine D., <i>Correspondence: Primer of Work with young people</i>	109
Stokes, R., The future of the A.A.L. - - - -	76
— <i>Correspondence: A.A.L. Conference</i> - - - -	45
Stone, Lucie R., A professional meeting in the U.S.A. - - - -	25-7
Students' problems, by O. S. Tomlinson - - - -	115-7
Swedish libraries and librarianship, by Kerstin Munck af Rosenschöld -	11-14
Sykes, P., <i>Correspondence: L.A. motion</i> - - - -	193-4
Tattersall, Leonie E., <i>Correspondence: Primer of work with young people</i> -	145
Taylor, C. W., <i>Correspondence: Classification</i> - - - -	5, 97-8
Taylor, L. E., A view of the Final Examination - - - -	139
— <i>Correspondence: National Councillors</i> - - - -	129
Thomas Wolfe, by G. B. Cotton - - - -	135-8
Correspondence, 160, 176.	
Tomlinson, O. S., Students' problems - - - -	115-7
— <i>ed.</i> , Winter Examinations, 1954: tutors' comments,	
suppl. between pp. 24 & 25	
— <i>ed.</i> , Summer Examinations, 1955: tutors' comments,	
suppl. between pp. 152 & 153	
> Turner, G., <i>Correspondence: The private press</i> - - - -	4
Tynemouth, W., The future of the A.A.L. - - - -	70-2
View of the Final Examination, by L. E. Taylor - - - -	139
Correspondence, 160.	
Webster, Monica O., I kept my English accent - - - -	23-5
Welcome wagon, by A. D. Mortimore - - - -	640
Correspondence, 100.	
Whatley, H. A., Reformer's nightmare - - - -	146-8
— <i>Correspondence: Public relations</i> - - - -	109
Wheatley, G., <i>Correspondence: The future of the A.A.L.</i> - - - -	107
White, Sheila, Examinations don't matter? - - - -	153
— S.L.A. Summer School, July 2-9 - - - -	162
Whiteman, P. M., <i>Correspondence: Blacklisted posts</i> - - - -	6-7
— <i>Correspondence: Library Schools</i> - - - -	194-6
Wilden-Hart, Marion, The place of the junior assistant in public libraries	17-20
— <i>Correspondence: Display</i> - - - -	144
— <i>Correspondence: Ideas on teaching</i> - - - -	3
Willson, Miss E. J., The future of the A.A.L. - - - -	72-4
Winter, Diane A., <i>Correspondence: Cataloguing rules</i> - - - -	48
Wood, Edna M., <i>Correspondence: Meetings</i> - - - -	98

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 48. NO. 1

JANUARY, 1955

OFFICERS OF THE A.A.L., 1955

PRESIDENT: J. S. Bristow, F.L.A., Central Library, Croydon.

VICE-PRESIDENT: W. Tynemouth, F.L.A., Central Library, Newcastle upon Tyne.

HON. SECRETARY: E. E. Moon, F.L.A., Central Library, Chiswick, W.4.

HON. TREASURER: W. S. Hudson, F.L.A., Central Library, Kensington, W.8.

HON. EDITOR: A. C. Jones, F.L.A., Central Library, Hornsey, N.8.

HON. SOLICITORS: Messrs. Metcalfe, Copeman & Pettefar,
3 and 4, Clement's Inn, W.C.2.

A NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am happy to take advantage of the pleasant post-war practice of allowing the President to address you through the *Assistant Librarian*. I would first like to thank you for the honour you have paid me in electing me, through your Council, to this high office for 1955.

Succession of Presidents have exhorted the younger members of the profession to come forward and take the place of the "grey-beards" on the Council. I am assured by the Honorary Editor that there is no shortage of aspiring contributors to the pages of the *Assistant Librarian*, but where are the aspirants for election as National Councillors? The recent election produced seven candidates for six offices. Of these seven, two have served as National Councillor since 1937 and four for some years since the war. Where, then, are the Councillors to take the place of those who have served well in the past and who continue to agree to their nomination through their spirit of service? How long are the many going to continue to rely on the strength of the few who have done more than their share of the work wisely and well for many years? The Association should be served by two

categories of Councillor: the steady, painstaking workers and those with ideas abreast of the times, to ensure progress and alertness. The latter can often make their contribution and retire from the scene. I would like to compare the Council to a garden in which we have too many perennials and not enough annuals! In a profession which is welcoming more and more of the fair sex, it is to be expected that more of them would be eager to take an active and vocal part in the affairs of the Association.

It could be that in this Diamond Jubilee year we shall do well to introduce anew a statement of aims and ambitions, to show a clear-cut policy. If any of you find your Association not what you want it to be, or not doing what you want it to do, then by writing to your Divisional Officers, to your National Councillors, to the Hon. Editor or to me, you can do much to initiate changes. I can assure you of a sympathetic hearing to any constructive criticism that you may care to offer.

I personally feel that the aims of the Association of Assistant Librarians should be to inspire enthusiasm for the library profession, and I hope that 1955 will be an enthusiastic year for all of us.

Croydon.

J. S. BRISTOW.

OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

LEARNING AND LIBRARIANSHIP

In your November issue, Mr. Lancashire airs some justified complaints about L.A. correspondence courses, but his solution is not the best one. I would suggest that he does what I did after one experience of an L.A. course, and that is, teach himself. By doing this he will save money and pass his examinations more quickly. I have passed three parts of the Registration Examination in eighteen months by making up my own courses of study. This is not as difficult as it sounds; with the aid of the Guide to Examinations it is possible to draw up a reading list and a scheme of work to cover the period chosen. Surely a person who has, or thinks he has, the qualifications to guide others in their studies and reading is capable of drawing up and sticking to his own timetable. I do claim to know something of what I am talking about on this matter as I am a qualified teacher, and I have passed examinations in the past with correspondence courses from both Oxford and Cambridge, and anyone who has used those aids to study would never spend a penny of hard-earned money on an L.A. course.

I read the articles and letters in the *Assistant Librarian* regularly, and I should like to make two points. Firstly, are assistant librarians supposedly of such low intelligence that they have to be given so many light-hearted, would-be funny, and often not very grammatical articles? For example, this month [November] I find on the first page of a professional journal an article which reads: "This means you, we thought We gingerly opened the door". Quite frankly it sounds more like *Children's Hour*.

My second point raises a more serious matter. Nearly every month I read letters and articles from library assistants grumbling about their work, their hours or their pay. It seems to me that the answer is very simple—get another job. Everyone entering the library profession knows that the hours are irregular, that there are examinations to study for, and they also know the salary scale. Therefore why grumble afterwards? The solution lies in their own hands—there are plenty of jobs in other spheres where the hours are regular and there are no examinations, and the library profession will be well rid of the malcontents. Librarianship is a vocation, not a job, and it is one which I had to wait fifteen years to enter, but I am proud to be a junior librarian rather than a headmistress.

JOAN FIRTH, A.C.P. (Mrs.).

[Setting aside the fact that correspondence courses are provided by the A.A.L., and that Mr. Lancashire made no complaint whatever about them in his article, Mrs. Firth's letter still contains many assertions which call for comment.

There is a deeper purpose in study than the passing of examinations, but anyone who has passed three parts of the Final Examination in eighteen months with the aid of correspondence courses—as has your Hon. Editor—will be unimpressed by her more modest claims for private study. That not everyone can do this—including apparently Mrs. Firth—underlines the point made below by Miss Wilden-Hart that students are individuals who must suit their methods to their temperaments. The method of study appropriate to an experienced ex-schoolteacher is not necessarily that best suited to the junior assistant in her teens.

We have not found librarians unduly preoccupied with grumbles about their work, their irregular hours or their pay. Those misfits who do find the hours irksome seem usually to lose no time in following Mrs. Firth's excellent advice. Nor is criticism usually directed against the examination system as such, but rather against the ineptitude exhibited here and there in the syllabus and in

particular examinations.

Many of us who claim to have a sense of vocation prefer not to be abused on that account, and without the concerted efforts of librarians and others our pay and conditions of service might by now have been insufficient even to attract Mrs. Firth from the teaching profession (where also, we gather, they are interested in both vocation and remuneration).—Hon. Ed.]

IDEAS ON TEACHING

Mr. Lancashire suggests [November issue] that the study timetable outside the classroom should be systematized by the tutor. This is impracticable. No two students need to do the same amount of work. A class is composed of individuals; some have read widely, others can hardly read; some have access to most of the required books, others find difficulty in obtaining even the essential ones; some are married (with responsibilities), others are single in noisy digs. Even supposing that all the class *want* to learn (and only a very naïve tutor would assume this), certain parts of the syllabus come more easily to some than to others.

And what of the mnemonic aids that Mr. Lancashire demands as his right as a student? A tutor should (if he has any integrity) teach the *subject* first, and aim at the *exam.* afterwards. Repetition does *not* ensure learning (how well the examiners must know this!). I would suggest that an interest in the subject would get the student halfway to success; the ability to think for himself would get him through the exam. The tutor's task, therefore, is not to cram facts into the heads facing him every week. Rather is it to arouse their interest, and to make them apply their knowledge to other facts they already know.

Rather than cut down the syllabus into a dried mass of essential but indigestible facts, is it not better for the tutor to teach the background of the subject, leaving the student to swot up the text books? We have a few adequate text books in librarianship now: but the background to all L.A. subjects is inadequately covered, in inaccessible places and often dispersed very widely, and no student, even if

he had time to locate this material, would have time to read it all. I would like to suggest that this is where the tutor should step in. He is not a cramming text book; he should be an authority on his subject. But that is another story!

MARION WILDEN-HART,
Assistant, Kensington P.L.

Bearing in mind that the attitude of the student matters more than the quality of the teacher, let us discover the effect on the student's attitude of the teaching methods proposed by Mr. Lancashire. The student starts his course with, let us hope, some enthusiasm for his subject. He should have already gained, through his library experience, that broad outline of the subject which Mr. Lancashire thinks so essential. Now he is anxious to settle down and learn something. What happens? He has the whole syllabus shot at him in a month; he is confused, because a little knowledge is a dangerous thing; more important, he starts to lose interest. He loses interest because there is nothing new to attract him. When the tutor gets round to Milton for the third time he is bored. He has already heard of Milton. More dangerous still, he probably thinks he knows all there is to know about Milton. "Why bother to go to any more classes? We only do something we finished months ago. I can learn just as much looking through my notes." The twin enemies of frustration and over-confidence have penetrated very deeply.

D. S. HOPE,
Assistant, Croydon P.L.

[Other letters criticising Mr. Lancashire's ideas have been received from Mr. J. H. Lamble, Nottingham and District Technical College, and Mr. A. C. Bubb, Hendon P.L.]

AN EXTERNAL DEGREE ?

If one may permissibly assess latent interest in a topic by the response to its ventilation, I must express great satisfaction with the correspondence columns in the November *Assistant*. The subject of external degrees and the struggles towards their achievement would appear to be of more than mere academic interest.

To Mr. Sykes of Warrington I say: Dear Paul, your fears are groundless. Accurate though your fire was in its aim to bring me down from the stratosphere with a loud crash, it was ammunition needlessly expended. If there is one weakness to which the External Novitiate is not prone, it is a propensity for an ivory tower. *His* tower is a cold front room with a vista of unimaginable bleakness leading to an objective which seems eternally remote. It is a source of strength, this soul-testing rigour: it leads to mastery of both poetry and plumbing—*literally* (after 2 years at the Pierian fount I have no taste for idle metaphor).

I feel particularly indebted to Mr. Stych for the mild correctives he administered to my more excessive claims. About the External Advisory Service he is quite right. Since originally drafting the article I have had occasion to review their offerings more closely, and I have found much encouragement from their suggestions. But I stick outrageously to my (I felt) quite minor point—I was startled to hear him refer to my "insistence"—re quotations.

The letter which made me feel most uncomfortable was Miss Fisher's—her phrase "yet the disposition persists" is most true. It went home directly and directed itself to my by now absurdly conditioned reflexes. Supposing the extension of one's studying days into early middle age is a kind of compulsion neurosis? I can only admit that it is a real danger, but dangerous to whom? To the student himself it is a harmless accretion, a mere eccentricity which we can surely allow him. His final objective will be reached one day; when it is, he will

be the first to realise it, if he is not wholly obsessed. And more important, his library should be the first to benefit from his obsession. In the case of an external degree hard won, not only is it *finis coronat opus* but *finis coronat bibliothecam*.

D. E. GERARD,

Deputy City Librarian, Exeter P.L.

THE PRIVATE PRESS

In his review of *The private press: its achievement and influence*, Mr. Binns does well to emphasize that after 1893 Cobden-Sanderson's work as a binder was almost entirely confined to design. If he turns to page 20, however, he will find he has unjustly accused me of failing to mention the Cuala Press.

GILBERT TURNER,

Borough Librarian, Richmond P.L.

CLASSIFICATION

May I, as a member of the staff of "a certain bibliography" interrupt my task of usurping the responsibilities of the U.D.C. in order to comment on the review of Sayers' *Introduction to library classification*, 9th edition, in your current issue?

I am sorry to see your comparatively young reviewer chiding the elderly author for introducing a new theoretical approach. After all, an elder who is not content to rest on his laurels, who goes on digesting new ideas, where necessary throwing out the old, is not so common a phenomenon. A journal representing mainly the younger section of the profession should be the last quarter to react with damp disapproval.

Why is classification still an educational problem—in your reviewer's words "a dreaded subject"? One reason is undoubtedly the air of oracular mystery and the burden of pure folklore which have become attached to the exposition of the Dewey classification. There is a good example in this review. Students are solemnly warned to avoid the temptation of "playing" with the mnemonic devices of Dewey. Such "play", one

gathers, is a "whim" and the result a "concoction". May I reassure students that there is no highly subtle nor secret art, known only to initiates, in the use of these devices? They are there to be used, with the normal care that classifying always demands. Another example which I have not seen in print lately, but which may be still going the rounds, is "Do not use the Relative Index, except as a last resort." The whole point of an index to anything is, of course, that it should be used first.

Is it not also time that we delivered ourselves from the false antithesis between enumeration and synthetic classification? Both factors occur in most modern schemes, including Colon, which merely exploits a pathway along which Dewey and U.D.C. tentatively ventured. The appearance of Colon-based ideas in the new *Introduction* is to be welcomed: there is no better method of approaching the Dewey labyrinth than through a preliminary study of the simple facet pattern of, say, half a dozen of the Colon main classes.

E. J. COATES,
*Chief Subject Cataloguer, British
National Bibliography.*

[Mr. C. W. TAYLOR replies:

Mr. Coates wanders well away from the substance of my review, and raises points not relevant to the issue. The review was primarily directed to the young Registration student, and I will curb my natural inclination to cross swords and limit my observations to essentials:—

1. Students could perhaps claim that classification has become an educational problem not through any air of oracular mystery and folk-lore encouraged by practising librarians and tutors, but through the enthusiastic, if misguided, attempts by exponents to introduce into Dewey a principle which was never intended for the classification of books.

2. The U.D.C. is the accepted special version of D.C. for the arrangement of bibliographies. Why attempt to create another completely individual scheme, based on the same schedules?

3. Rightly or wrongly, the Colon scheme is excluded from the syllabus

for the L.A. examinations. The new edition of the *Introduction*, which is a standard text-book, by pressing its claims, will only tend to confuse candidates.

4. The recent ruling of the examiners allows candidates to gain pass marks by using Dewey in the normal accepted manner. Why should we encourage them to risk failure by following a much more elaborate and detailed approach to the practical classification examination than that adopted by Mr. Coates and the many others who satisfied the examiners prior to 1950 and the advent of B.N.B.]

CATALOGUING RULES

As a student of cataloguing, I am struggling to master the many pettifogging rules in the A—A Code. I am aware that there is a committee in the process of revising these rules, but I should like to see something done for my followers, not descendents.

I suggest that each Division of the A.A.L. should set up a committee to consider the rules and formulate a revised code. Then a committee consisting of one member from each Divisional committee could co-ordinate them into a reasonable set of rules for presentation to the Library Association.

CATHERINE R. MORTON,
Loughborough.

A.A.L. CONFERENCE

I hope that neither staff guilds nor junior assistants will be influenced by Mr. Chapman's letter in the November issue. Every staff guild has as one of its aims the encouragement of members to take an active interest in professional affairs. If it can afford the expense, why should not the guild subsidise a junior assistant at the A.A.L. Conference? The assistant is usually expected to tell his colleagues something about the conference at a later guild meeting, and if enthusiasm and interest can be spread in this way, the expenditure is legitimate. Other bodies send delegates to conferences and I am sure that none of them is considered a "shameless beggar"!

Mr. Chapman would prefer to see

our juniors gathering rosebuds Of course they all enjoy this, but some of them are also interested in their chosen profession. It is a fallacy that interest in the latter precludes enjoyment of life: any library assistant worth his salt is capable of "living a double life."

To any junior who has read Mr. Chapman's last sentence I would say, "Don't believe it." A.A.L. conferences are not dull affairs unless you deliberately sleep through them—if you can. Visiting new places, meeting new people, discussions and parties, official and unofficial, provide plenty of scope for assistants to enlarge their experience of librarianship—and life—if they so desire.

JEAN BINDER,
Reference Librarian, St. Albans P.L.

FILING AND STORAGE OF SPECIAL MATERIALS

The London and Home Counties Branch of the Library Association have entrusted me with the organisation of a two-day Exhibition of library equipment to be held at Chaucer House on 11th and 12th January next. The theme of this particular display is modern British and American methods of filing and storage of special materials—pamphlets, maps, atlases, microfilm, films, newspapers, gramophone records, illustrations, archives, etc.—with which the modern library is particularly concerned in these days. We are also fortunate in having three special exhibits: the handling, filing, etc., of news cuttings (prepared by the Press Library of the Royal Institute of International Affairs); the selection, mounting and filing of illustrations (prepared by Paddington Public Libraries); and the handling, repair, filing, etc., of archives (prepared by the Westminster City Archivist).

The Exhibition will be open each day from noon to 8.30 p.m., and on Tuesday, 11th January there will be a meeting at 6.30 p.m., at which papers will be given on the principles and current methods of filing special material in libraries. As you will see,

the subject of the Exhibition has an interest for libraries throughout the country, and if you can give the Exhibition any publicity in which the fact that all librarians are welcome is stressed, I know that the Branch will be most grateful.

ROBERT L. COLLISON,
Reference Librarian, Westminster P.L.

FINES

[Refers to letter on p. 168 of the
November issue]

Oh Mr. Thompson! Suppose that you are standing in a queue at the library and the man in front of you refuses to pay his fine. Would you not feel that it is an unjust world when you found you had to pay a fine too and stumped up because you thought twopence not worth "brawling" about? Why should the reader be patted on the shoulder because he made a fuss and you be penalized because you are quiet and polite and possess a social conscience?

Whether fines *should* be charged and whether they *may* be charged does not concern this particular question. If fines *are* charged, they *should* be charged. Twopence may not be worth brawling about, but the principle behind it should certainly not be waived for this kind of discrimination. But perhaps Mr. Thompson, you really believe that he who shouts loudest need not pay his library fines.

A. P. SHEARMAN,
*Senior Assistant, Slough Branch,
Bucks Co. L.*

[A similar letter has been received from Mr. N. V. Read, West Sussex Co.L.]

BLACK-LISTED POSTS

We agree with "Thomas Clearwater" [November issue] on the "set-backs to the profession which have occurred at Thurrock, Bath and Islington," and we feel bound to comment on the statement that "the applicants [at Islington] included a library school lecturer, whom we presume has something to say about professional standards and behaviour to his students."

We regret very much any applications for black-listed posts for the general harm which results when such posts continue to be filled in spite of our professional claims. We shall continue to instruct students in the reasonable ideals of professional employment, and hope to continue to resemble Cæsar's wife in at least one point. The publicity given to the applications has placed lecturers in a position no less "intolerably embarrassing" than that ascribed to the Islington Deputy, and they have not as a body earned that embarrassment.

The names of the applicants to Islington seem to have been widely known before the appointment, and that is usually the case with any appointment which is in the eyes of

the profession unsatisfactory. May we suggest that in future when the national officers of the A.A.L. learn of such applications, letters be sent to members asking for a denial or confirmation of the supposed applications. If a denial is forthcoming, no harm would be done, we could hope, but if not the names of such persons might very well be listed as applicants without comment in the *Assistant Librarian*. Even a refusal to reply might be reported without critical comment in the *Assistant Librarian*.

This suggestion for moral sanctions might lead to professional standards, which cannot be enforced by legal sanctions.

NEVILLE DAIN and P. M. WHITEMAN,
Leeds School of Librarianship.

COUNCIL NOTES

NOVEMBER 14.

THE FIRST item on the agenda, "posts advertised at inadequate salaries", was considered to be of such importance that it is dealt with separately below. The Council then received a very favourable report of the A.A.L. Session at the Hastings Conference, the only criticism made of Mr. Moon's paper being that it had activated discussion amongst chiefs rather than more junior members of the profession, and we passed on feeling that this had happened before and that there must be a moral somewhere.

There was then an introductory discussion on the structure of the Library Association, with particular regard to the non-existence of a municipal libraries section. The Council were aware that there was a movement amongst the special sections to suggest the creation of a municipal libraries section in order to rationalise the structure of the Library Association and to make it more satisfactory from their point of view. At the moment, some of them at least feel that the special sections are appendages to a body whose norm is public librarianship. The immediate reaction of municipal librarians is, of course, that the Library Association is already over-sectionalised, and that the creation of yet another section is ridiculous. However, there are some who feel that municipal librarians suffer because there is no section specifically designed to consider and react to their problems—the lack of organised municipal comment on local government reorganisation has been cited as an example—and, indeed, that municipal problems can only be discussed in a council or a committee consisting partly of non-public librarians. Even county librarians are not in this position. It was agreed to circulate a memorandum and discuss the Association's reaction to the proposal in the future, paying particular regard to the unquestioned continuance of the A.A.L. in the proposed new circumstances.

Having appointed its representatives to the Library Association Council and Committees for 1955, and having considered the reports of its own committees, the Council was told that no further information was yet available on Appendix Two of the new local government salary

scales; and must just patiently await a further announcement. It seemed to be generally agreed that if the A.P.T. III award was vague, the reference to professional librarians in Appendix Two of the National Joint Council review of the "Scheme of Conditions of Service" reached a new record depth of doubt.

The growth of the Association's correspondence courses and its publications programme has reached such a degree that the Council has called for a report on a possible scheme of reorganisation.

1955 is the Association's diamond jubilee year, and all Divisions are being asked to further consider possible means of celebration.

During the day most of the Council had an opportunity of inspecting the recently opened Library Association library in its new quarters, and whilst we were impressed by what we saw, there was general regret at the lack of publicity which had been given to London student librarians concerning its hours of opening.

The Committee meetings produced their usual quota of routine consideration, but there were one or two items worthy of special note. These included discussion on the usefulness of periodic conferences of correspondence course tutors; and a detailed programme for the 1955 week-end conference, to be held in Birmingham in April, with "Publicity" as the theme. The *Assistant Librarian* is to be published monthly in 1955. The Finance and General Purposes Committee deplored "the fact that this Association cannot increase payments to Divisions until this Association receives increased capitation grants from the Library Association," which would perhaps be a somewhat sombre note on which to end this series of Council Notes (not that finance is the most important constituent ingredient in a successful Division).

But one final resolution was passed which will fix the attention of the next Council firmly on the future. It is no secret that the Honorary Treasurer of the Library Association has been stumping certain parts of the country advocating in a genteel and pleasant way the abolition of the A.A.L. Not directly, of course, but delicately and skilfully. He is, however, sowing the sort of seed which grows best on stony ground, and the Council have set up a committee to clarify the basic and distinctive policy of the A.A.L. and to consider methods for the adequate publicising of that policy and for its effective implementation. Those who would like to abolish the A.A.L. might well read the opening paragraphs of Somerset Maugham's *The razor's edge*, which the author explains is going to end neither with a death nor a marriage. Some people tend to forget that there was a marriage of the L.A. and A.A.L. in 1929, and, as Maugham would have said, interest has passed to the next generation. The best future for the L.A. as well as the A.A.L. lies in the most efficient exploitation of the one by the other. And finally, on this point, I am indebted to a recent B.B.C. programme, *Any Questions*, in which it was said that there are in Britain to-day far too many people banded together to abolish this or prevent the other, instead of directing their energies to construction.

BLACK POSTS

THE CONSTANT REPETITION of a name in pleasant or unpleasant circumstances can, in a relatively short space of time, build up a reputation that will last for years to come. Islington is such a name. The unhappy story of the attempt to attract applications from qualified librarians is a pitiable one. The A.A.L. Council hope that this will be the last chapter of a sorry tragedy in which authorities and individual members alike have played parts they may well wish to forget.

The circumstances of this particular appointment are only too well

known at the moment to so many of us; but there are some who will not know, and others coming on afterwards, for whom the background concerning Islington should be placed on record. The facts are simple. Islington advertised for a chief librarian at a salary which was below a reasonable level. Now for some time the Library Association, the Society of Municipal and County Chief Librarians, and Nalگو have been actively protesting against posts advertised at inadequate salaries as they appeared. The ultimate drastic step has been for one or more of these bodies to "blacklist" the post and leave it to the good sense and conscience of members not to apply. This policy has become increasingly well supported by individual members of the various associations who realise that this form of sanction can be successful. One of the encouraging things about Islington was that the final number of applicants was the lowest on record—but such action can only be successful if it is unanimous. Of course, the fact that there were even three "extra-mural" candidates was unfortunate, but this figure was considerably below that reached for Bath.

The A.A.L. Council recently considered its attitude towards the individuals who did apply. As the A.A.L. had not pronounced publicly against this specific advertisement (although there could have been no doubt about the Association's attitude in general), and as the individuals themselves agreed that the applications had been unfortunate, it is decided to concentrate on such future action as might be necessary, using Divisional mechanism to deter applications in approved cases. It is here that individuals can play their parts. The opinions of those with whom we work are most important—and can play a vital part if expressed before a stand is taken.

There are some things which should be remembered. First, the position of potential candidates within the system is a most difficult one. Secondly, the most effective time for intervention is before the post is advertised so far as the authority is concerned, and before the application is made as far as the individual is concerned: it would seem that some authorities have an oriental phobia about losing face. Thirdly, it may sometimes be that the salary protested against was the salary fixed by the authority or its establishment committee and that it is, in fact, below that recommended by the libraries committee. Fourthly, it remains impossible to fathom the mentality of an authority which will appoint from a list of applicants which it knows excludes candidates at least as well qualified, but whose higher sense of professional duty has prevented them from applying. A possible explanation is that the authority has a poor opinion of its library service—but more probably it has a complete absence of real civic pride. Finally, it is impossible to understand how a council influenced by true trade union principles could ever find itself in the position reached at Islington. With the innocence of the offended, Islington authority members might want to know why they have been singled out from Bath, Durham County and Thurrock. They have not been singled out: they chose the path themselves.

The importance of the gradings of chief librarians is a matter of concern to the A.A.L. Our examination of the application of the "A.P.T. III" award revealed too many cases where the salary being paid to the chief prevented the re-grading of many posts above A.P.T. III. Nevertheless, the principle is the same, whatever the grade. To apply for a post in the clerical scale demanding professional qualifications is violating the same principle of putting the common weal before personal gain. To cheapen yourself cheapens the profession of which you are a part.

One problem remains, How should one treat a successful (or

unsuccessful) candidate for a "black" post? To hate in the heat of the moment is wrong—but human. To propose to hate without end is indefensible. To exclude or attempt to exclude the authority from membership would mean disaster to the innocent members of the staff and those who will join them. On the other hand, it would be hypocrisy to seek out the hand of the "successful" to shake it. To ignore him is to side-step a problem—a real problem if the appointment is local. Pity is probably the most Christian reaction. This is especially so for one whose internal promotion has been forced upon him. One can only hope that his authority's attitude will improve when they think their unpleasant "face" is safe, and that for the sake of those whose future is in his hands he will rise to the occasion. One can hope, but in pity must also doubt.

W.T.

ELECTION OF NATIONAL COUNCILLORS FOR 1955

We, being appointed scrutineers for the above election, declare the following to be the result of the poll:—

Elected.	No. of Votes.
1. Phillips	1,676
2. Tomlinson	1,560
3. Willson	1,494
4. Carver	1,439
5. Smith	1,381
6. Clark	1,329
Not Elected.	No. of Votes.
7. Enser	1,253

Total voting papers returned 2,252
Invalid voting papers 68
Valid voting papers counted 2,184

(Signed) J. S. BRISTOW.
Presiding Officer.

Scrutineers:

E. Moon,
Derek Austin.

10th December, 1954. W. S. Hudson.
Chaucer House, P. M. Perrin.
London, W.1. D. B. Gibson.

WHO'S WHO IN THE A.A.L. - I

Wherein we shall try to fill some of the gaps in a recently published reference book.

BRISTOW, John S., F.L.A., Deputy Chief Librarian, Croydon Public Libraries, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon (Telephone CROYdon 3627). Address: 7, Havelock Road, Croydon (Tel.: ADDiscombe 5101). Born: Yes. Married: Yes. Two sons, neither of whom will become librarians (one will be a scientist, branch at present unknown, the other a space-pilot). Appointments: Assistant, Southall, 1931-35; Lending Librarian, Exeter, 1935-40; R.A.F., 1941-46; Chief Cataloguer, Southampton, 1947-52; Chief Assistant, Croydon, 1952-53. Society and Association: A.A.L.; Honorary Treasurer, 1948-1953; Chairman, Wessex Division, 1950. Special interests: motoring, gardening, library politics and library education, reading, bookbinding, philately, contract bridge.

LIBRARY ASSOCIATION LIBRARY

The Library has now been transferred to the Third Floor at Chaucer House and an attractive reading room providing seats for 22 readers is a feature of the new premises. A description of the Library and an account of the facilities provided will be published shortly in the *Library Association Record*. Members are reminded that books may be borrowed for home reading and a postal service is available for any member in the United Kingdom unable to visit Chaucer House. The Rules of the Library

will be found in the *Library Association Year Book*, 1954, and the *Students' Handbook*, 1954, on page 37 in each case.

The hours of opening are Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9 a.m.—6 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday, 9 a.m.—8 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.—12 noon. There will be no evening opening during the month of August, nor during the week after Christmas. The new hours will come into force on Tuesday, 4th January, 1955.

SWEDISH LIBRARIES AND LIBRARIANSHIP

The report of an interview with Miss Kerstin Munck af Rosenschöld,
Library Adviser to the Swedish Board of Education.

This article will be read most usefully in conjunction with the paper on Swedish libraries by Mr. Bengt Hjelmqvist, delivered in the course of the 1954 L.A. Conference and published in the Conference Proceedings.

Will you first say something about the background against which Swedish libraries must be viewed?

Sweden covers an area that is nearly double (9/5) the size of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland together, but our density of population is only about one-thirteenth of yours. Only three cities—Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö—have more than 100,000 inhabitants. Out of 109 municipal library systems having professional staff forty have only *one* and twenty *two* trained librarians each. In communities with less than 6,000 inhabitants the library staff is still normally non-professional and part-time.

How are librarians recruited in Sweden? At what age?

Some candidates are recruited through vocational guidance during their last year at school (at the age of 18-20); others find their way to libraries during or after their university studies. (An academic degree is normally necessary for admittance to our library school). *Some* active recruiting is going on all the time, but I am afraid few real efforts to find suitable candidates have been made.

Thus, the age when prospective librarians make their choice of career varies considerably. Compared with conditions in your country many of our candidates enter the profession late, at the age of 24 to 26, some, even later than that.

What is the method of formal training?

The Swedish State Library School is run by the Library Advisers and was started in 1926. Up to 1952 the course was held every second year, now it is annual. As previously mentioned, applicants have to be university graduates (most commonly they have a degree in the humanities, *fil. kand.* or *fil. mag.*, requiring between three and five years of study). In addition to the degree, which in exceptional cases may be substituted by some equivalent qualifications, the students must have a six-months' elementary training in library work before being admitted to the school. In principle this training is given by our 24 county libraries and four other large municipal libraries. (In Sweden county libraries are also municipal libraries). The elementary course can be taken by anyone who has successfully completed about a third of his academic degree. This pre-school training is a combination of practical and theoretical studies. The two first months are purely practical and serve also as a probationary period, after which unsuitable candidates should be turned away. The theoretical part consists of a four months' correspondence course held by the *Folkbibliotekens Korrespondensinstitut* (The Public Library Correspondence Institute) at Uppsala Public Library. This course must be completed by the student while he or she is working in the training library. A member of the staff is responsible for supervising the work of the student.

The correspondence course is free of charge as is the apprenticeship period in the library. The student is allowed to receive a small salary during the last two months of his elementary training.

The total length of experience of those admitted to the school varies between eight and eighteen months.

How is the library school organized?

The course lasts from October 1st until March 31st (with a break of about three weeks for Christmas holidays). The students pay a fee of some £16 for the whole course; efforts to make it free of charge have not yet been successful. Some 25 students are admitted each year. The school is subsidised by a special State grant. Not included in the school's budget are the salaries of the library adviser, who acts as leader of the school, and other members of the staff of the Library Advisers who teach or in other ways participate in the running of the school.

The school has its own premises in the same building as the office of the Library Advisers.

The curriculum includes the history of books and libraries, the administration and organization of public libraries, book selection and book knowledge, reference work, bibliographies, cataloguing and classification.

The faculty consists of the three library advisers and, in all, some forty librarians and subject specialists from the Stockholm area.

The lecture method is only used to a small extent. Seminar and discussion technique is especially favoured. In some subjects tasks are carried out by students working in small groups. This is particularly the case in library administration and organization, which is run as a series of weekly seminars all through the course.

At the beginning of the autumn term the whole class is taken out into the country for a week to make a kind of sociological survey of some district large enough to be able to support a professional full-time librarian. The students interview local authorities about financial and administrative problems, study the school system and the libraries, obtain information about all kinds of social, religious, political and civic activity, and round it off with a Gallup poll about the public's interest in books and reading. The material is collected, stencilled and distributed among the students (but not published, of course, as the survey is made with no pretension whatever as to scientific standard). During the following series of seminars all problems are put with this actual district in mind—to make the work more realistic and more interesting. This method has proved very satisfactory. As a by-product our students gain some useful knowledge of problems which they may have missed altogether during their university years.

In order to get their diplomas the students have to pass examinations in the seven main subjects mentioned above. They are awarded graded marks which are shown on their diplomas.

Is this the only library school in Sweden?

No, Stockholm Public Library in 1948 organized a school for the training of their own staff. It is divided into two parts: one three-year course based on *studentexamen* (higher school certificate, the examination taken at the end of 12-13 years of schooling) and leading to an assistant's degree, and a librarian's degree, based on the lower degree and granted after the completion of an advanced course. So far 25 students have passed the assistant's examination while none has taken the librarian's degree.

Are you satisfied with your present education for librarianship?

No, we have not yet reached a solution that can be considered satisfactory. The whole question is constantly under discussion and it is likely to be taken up officially in the near future. The staff of university, research and special libraries are also interested in the problem and some kind of survey of meaning and purpose regarding the training of staff for all these types of libraries will be necessary.

There has been much discussion recently in England of the practicability of dividing staff into professional and non-professional categories. Do you have this division in Sweden?

Yes, we have, and in my opinion it is not only reasonable but necessary. It has been repeated—almost *ad nauseam*—that all library duties do not require professional knowledge or skill: 30—40—50 per cent of the tasks carried out in an ordinary public library are of a clerical nature and should be carried out by staff with suitable qualifications for doing that kind of work. This theory is accepted by most librarians in Sweden—but it is not yet always applied in practice. An unofficial standard recommends one clerical to two professionals in smaller libraries and two clericals to three professionals in larger libraries. Even in one-man libraries there is need for clerical help which can be provided on a part-time basis.

Need I stress the arguments for a division of duties? That it is waste of money to let professionally trained staff do tasks that clerical staff can do as well or even better; the result will invariably be low salaries. That the service will suffer if untrained staff is asked to do professional work. That professional librarians need a certain amount of daily challenge in their work in order to keep mentally and professionally alert and to develop their service. It is the librarian's job to plan the work, obtain the money for it, choose the right books and other material and bring it to the right reader so that it gets used by those who need it—whether they are conscious of their needs or not. If the librarian has to fill half his day with checking, shelving, counting statistics, typing cards, etc., etc., his primary duties must suffer.

What is the status of the librarian in Sweden?

In our country the educational standard of librarians roughly corresponds to that of *läroverksadjunkter*, the lower grade of teachers in secondary schools, who are placed in grades 27 and 29 on the civil servant salary scale. Their commencing salaries are approximately £1,130 to £1,260 a year. All salaries for the staff of public libraries are regulated through negotiations between the librarians' union and The federation of Swedish towns. The commencing salary of a library school graduate is, however, only £733 (grade 19) which is two grades lower than the commencing salaries of elementary school teachers. If they do not seek promotion they will automatically reach grade 22 (£850) after twelve years, with an increase every third year. A first assistant is placed in grade 21 (£808) and reaches grade 24 (£953) in due course. The salaries of librarians in the smallest one-man libraries start at 21. In larger libraries the amount is graded in proportion to the size of the population. There are twenty positions in the grades 27—29 and eleven positions in grades 30—33 (£1,324—£1,490). Thus, only thirty-one positions out of a total of some 450 in public libraries have reached the same level as the one held by secondary school teachers.

It should be noted that people holding positions requiring equivalent training in municipalities—towns and cities—usually are better paid.

This is, of course, even more true about people working in business and industry.

One result of the fact that librarians' salaries are among the bottom ones as compared with people with equivalent qualifications is that only one-fifth of the profession consists of men.

Will you say something of the organization of the Swedish library profession?

There are several associations of and organizations for librarians in Sweden. The most comprehensive is *Sveriges allmänna biblioteksförening*. (SAB) our Library Association. It has 623 individual and 1,539 institutional members. Three different groups have formed divisions within the association in order to promote their special interests: the children's and young people's librarians, the hospital librarians, and the committee members. As regards the various activities carried out by the association I would like to refer to Mr. Hjelmqvist's paper.

In 1938 a public librarians union was formed, *Svenska Folkbibliotekarietärföreningen* (SFF), The Association of Swedish Public Librarians. Originally it was affiliated to the Society of Municipal Officers (corresponding to NALGO) but in 1952 it joined instead the Central Organization of Academics in Sweden (SACO). The aims and activities of the Association of Swedish Public Librarians were described by Mr. Möhlenbrock in an article in the LAR 1951, p. 399-401.

In 1952 the part-time working, non-professional librarians formed a union, *Deltidsanställda folkbibliotekariers förening*.

Besides these groups there are several organizations formed by the staffs of research and special libraries, e.g. *Svenska bibliotekariesamfundet* and *Tekniska litteratursamfundet*.

Berkshire Bookbinding Co., Ltd.

(Directors J. E. Cook and P. E. Cook)

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS

NON - FICTION AND
REFERENCE BINDINGS
ARE OUR SPECIALITY

**27, ELDON TERRACE
READING, BERKS.**

Telephone: Reading 60688.

BENLOCK LIMITED

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS

*Specialists in
Juvenile Binding*



**SOUTH BANK
MIDDLESBROUGH
YORKS**

ROUND THE DIVISIONS—I

NORTH WALES

THE NORTH WALES DIVISION was inaugurated at Llandudno on 13th April, 1949. It can therefore claim to be one of the youngest Divisions and is also probably one of the smallest, the membership being from 30 to 40. But the area covered is a large one, comprising the Counties of Anglesey, Caernarvon, Denbigh, Flint, Merioneth and Montgomery. A glance at the map will show that the population is very scattered, with the exception of a close concentration on the coastal belt, and in the industrial area in the east. The libraries in this large area are scattered far and wide, consisting of a county library in Anglesey, Caernarvonshire County Library and a public library at Caernarvon, public libraries at Bangor, Colwyn Bay, Conway, Llandudno, Rhyl and Wrexham, Denbighshire County Library at Ruthin, Flintshire County Library at Mold, Merionethshire County Library at Dolgelly, and Montgomeryshire County Library at Newtown, all with numerous branches. In addition, there is a University library at Bangor, and a library in the Adult Education Centre at Coleg Harlech.

The distances involved indicate that the main difficulty of the Division is that of holding meetings at centres convenient for members. This restricts the number of meetings held annually. Nevertheless, the Division manages to keep its head above water, holding three or four meetings a year. They are usually held on Wednesday

afternoons, this being the most common half-day. The meetings take various forms, ranging from summer-time visits to places of interest in the area, to winter-time talks by A.A.L. officials, booksellers, novelists, archivists, etc. The Division has also taken in its stride visits to printing works, museums, and in fact, any place which will provide interest and instruction for assistants engaged in study. The venue for meetings varies west, east and centre. However, the meetings held at Colwyn Bay, Rhyl and Llandudno have proved the most popular.

It may be of interest to point out that the Division covers what is considered the most Welsh part of Wales, consequently the vast majority of our members are bilingual. The last issue of the News-sheet which the Division publishes was in fact the first bilingual one. Apart from the regular publication of *Cambria*, as it is called, the Division has also published a Register of methods, compiled from the returns of a questionnaire circulated to all participating libraries. This was intended to help assistants studying for the L.A. examinations, and tabulated various methods of book issuing, charging, classification systems, etc.

The Division may be small and scattered, but it has every intention of keeping on with the good work of providing opportunities for exchanging ideas and meeting socially, two aims which would otherwise be impossible of realization.

CRAMERS

for MUSIC

MUSICAL LITERATURE
AND MUSIC BINDING

139, New Bond Street
London, W.1

★ Special Music Enquiry Bureau

BEST WISHES

for 1955

from

KEESING'S

New Volume just starting
Newcomers are welcome

THE THURLOE SERIES

*of special library
editions——ideal
for travelling
libraries*

Arts and Crafts
Cycling Tourist Guides
Electrical
Engineering
Gardening
Pets and Livestock
Modelling, etc.
Modelling, Railways
Photography
Wireless and
Television
Juveniles and
Elementary Readers

*Catalogues and Sample on
request*

OPPENHEIM & Co. Ltd.

*Library and Wholesale
Booksellers*

25, THURLOE STREET,
SOUTH KENSINGTON,
LONDON, S.W.7.

Telephone :
Kensington 6807 & 9431

A. M. HALDANE LTD.



WE SPECIALISE IN
CHILDREN'S BOOKS
listed and annotated in our
monthly *Juvenile Guide*



B.N.B. ORDERS



SPECIAL REQUESTS



PROMPT SERVICE
especially in the London
Area



5, DENMARK STREET,
CHARING CROSS ROAD,
W.C.2

TEMple Bar 3650

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 48. No. 2

FEBRUARY, 1955

THE PLACE OF THE JUNIOR ASSISTANT IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

By MARION WILDEN-HART.

THE PLACE of the Junior Assistant in Public Libraries cannot be surveyed clearly until work in libraries has been divided into professional and non-professional categories, and until each member of the staff is appointed to undertake a particular job. This does not mean that the Chief Librarian should be unable to move the staff round from one department to another, or to another branch, but rather that specialization must exist at the lowest levels, if librarianship is to become fully professionalized. At the moment we allocate to the Juniors any job that a graded assistant does not undertake. These duties vary according to the values that the Assistant-in-Charge of staff sets upon each job. Thus at one library the new junior is responsible for filing the borrower's registration forms, where in another library it is the "responsibility" of the Senior Assistant. An unqualified librarian deals with the regional bureau requests while the qualified librarian stamps out books on the counter and does the shelving. Withdrawals are done in one library by the Deputy Librarian and in another by a clerical worker. These examples are not imaginary, they are fact, and because they are happening now, and many more instances besides, it is important that the profession reviews the whole subject of Staff Management. Here I want to concern myself only with the place of the Junior Assistants.

I would suggest we have three types of Juniors working in Public Libraries: (1) Counter hands and clerical workers; (2) Immature sub-professionals; (3) Mature sub-professionals. In the first category, I mean all those indispensable assistants working in libraries, stamping out books, writing overdues and tickets, etc., invaluable to the everyday running of the library, *even though* they have taken no exams., still less have they a wish to become a member of the profession. The sub-professionals are those who enter libraries at the age of 16 or over, who intend to make it a career, who study to that end and who take an intelligent interest in the wider spheres of librarianship as well as the general routine of their particular library. These sub-professionals make up the second and third groups of the division of juniors. The immature group is judged not by age but by library experience and general dependability, and the mature sub-professionals, not by whether they are graduates (in point of fact many graduates are professionally very immature), but by the assimilation of techniques and methods which are the main concern of the librarian at this level.

What are the professional and non-professional jobs, and how can we farm out the work according to the capabilities of each member of the staff, and still maintain an efficient library service? That question cannot

be answered by one person, but it is time an attempt was made by a professional body. What we can decide now is how to improve our staff management in our present organisation.

First we should ensure that training is given as a matter of course and not as a concession "when there is time". Here I do not mean long talks and lectures on the examination syllabus, but guidance in the everyday tasks of the library, and explanations of why the work is carried out *and to what end*. Is it not reasonable that an assistant should want to know why so many overdue must be written, or why certain books are turned down on approval, or how books are obtained from other libraries? Is it not unreasonable to expect a junior to be able to file in correct order when the principles of filing have never been explained? Yet filing the issue is one of the first jobs given to a new junior. And how can we expect the juniors to use a catalogue reliably when they do not know how it is made up—indeed, many students sitting Group A of the Registration have never even been responsible for withdrawals, still less have they done any cataloguing. Training then must be given in a systematic way. At the moment we allocate jobs to assistants with very little regard to the nature of their previous experience, and with almost no regard to the assistant's professional education and future. It is true that only someone fully qualified and with experience should be put in charge of preparing book lists, bibliographies, etc., but why not allow an assistant studying Part B Registration, to assist them? How can an assistant be proficient in filing, when he is not given the job of filing until he is proficient? And if he passes Group A, knowing the rules theoretically, does this mean he is then qualified to do the job without any experience? Surely it is time to relate academic training received through professional courses to practical work in the library. Should not a Reader's Adviser have had experience in cataloguing and reference work, as well as in the lending library? Yet there are many assistants sitting at the enquiry desk in libraries who have never had any reference experience or worked in a cataloguing department. If the Senior Assistants are to gain this experience, they must begin to obtain it at a junior level and unless they do so they will lack some qualification for the more senior duties.

I believe we begin to train our Junior Assistants too late, and very often not at all. Library classes are not a substitute for staff training: they are a means by which one becomes professionally educated. Training must begin the first day the new assistant begins work, and not left "until he has found his feet." What then must he be trained in? This will depend on the individual, his age, his character, and his previous education.

I believe there are certain things he must understand from the first, and to have to learn through his errors is unfair to him and to the rest of the staff. It is necessary to insist on accuracy from the first. This is not stressed enough in librarianship, and it is one of the most important qualities a librarian must possess. Accuracy can only be learnt by having attention drawn to the need for it, and by example. Tidiness is either a quality inherent in the individual or something which must be learnt, again by example. It is the key to good administration and efficient working—and incidentally, a tidy worker is usually a good organiser. It is essential to insist on neatness because untidiness leads so quickly to an indifferent attitude and thus to a bad assistant. Speed should not be stressed at first, even if this is inconvenient at the time; this will come naturally with confidence, and it is better to do a little well than a great deal inaccurately. Diplomacy is difficult to teach and many have still never learnt it! It is important that assistants should learn tact, discretion

and diplomacy, and as in commerce, so in libraries, assistants should know that the customer is never mistaken, though in extreme cases he may make pardonable errors! It should be stressed to all members of the staff that it is not only wise, but very often prudent, to refer to senior members of the staff, and that in doing so, no discredit to the junior is given. This also applies to answering enquiries, however simple. The juniors must be made to realise that it is excusable not to know, but not to be able to find out is failing the public whom we serve. So many juniors are ashamed of appearing ignorant, that they will not refer to a more qualified member of the staff, and only training, and if necessary, insistence, will overcome this attitude. An assistant who wants to find out is more valuable to libraries than one who knows some of the answers. And lastly, it is necessary to train the new assistant to use his knowledge with intelligence. This is important in libraries where the *same* problem seldom occurs exactly in its previous form. This can only be done if the assistant understands the whole process, and not just his particular part of it. To insist on careful filing of tickets, or accurate registration and proper signatures, etc., only makes sense if the purpose is clearly understood. Or the importance of full details of a request can only be fully appreciated if the process of tracing the work is in some measure known.

If the junior assistant requires this training when he has just entered the library, he will require further training for the various duties when he has "found his feet", and it is at this level that the staff should train for work that is distinctly either professional or non-professional. If he is to be a professional he will have begun to take exams., and the importance of this is not that the Chief will be able to report to the Committee of more successes (or attempts!), but that the course of study will assist the member of the staff in his library duties. This will only be the case if the senior librarians take an interest in the junior assistant's study and if the juniors are allowed to practise (to some degree, and if necessary, with supervision), what they learn academically.

It is probably true to-day that many of our G.D. assistants know the contents of the required twenty reference books for the Entrance far better than many of the Seniors and many libraries would do well to benefit from the study of students taking the literature papers of Registration and Final levels (Sociology, Music, Twentieth Century Literature, etc.), by revising their stock in these subjects, thus assisting the students as well as the library. But besides actual training there is need for a means by which seniors and juniors can meet together on common ground and each respect the other's view. Because a junior is unqualified and inexperienced does not mean that his criticism is unsound—it may be very valuable and he may have some suggestions as well. This need for a channel through which the voices of the juniors (complaints, opinions, criticisms) can be heard is met in some libraries through Informal Talks, Staff Meetings, or Staff Guilds, and there is room for many more of these. Usually these meetings take place out of library hours, but occasionally a meeting should be held in library time, solely for the purpose of discussing library routine matters and policy, where juniors as well as seniors may criticize and give suggestions.

I believe we need to regard each member of the staff more as an individual and less as part of a unit. Team-work is essential, but the qualities of each member of the team should be fostered, valued and developed. To this end I believe each junior should be responsible for one particular job, however simple. It is not possible to give one job to one person (because of working shifts and because some days are

much busier than others), but it is possible to give the *responsibility* of each job to one person.

These are only some of the things we should do to improve our staff administration. Many libraries already do all this and more, but many others do not. Let us no longer refer to all those not in charge of a department or Branch as "Assistants", administering them without regard to the individual's training or future career. The staff may be counter hands, fiction cataloguers, reserve assistants, even ticket writers, but they are first and foremost individuals, with as much to give as to be given, though it may take some training and some little while to find out their true worth. If the staff is administered well, they will see that the library is run well too.

PSYCHOLOGY IN THE LIBRARY

By CHASE DANE,

Assistant, Publishing Department, American Library Association.

WHEN A jolly fat man rolls up to your desk and asks for a good book, do you recommend Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies* or Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*? When a lean and nervous patron approaches you timidly and softly asks for the name of a good biography or novel, do you suggest Clarence Day's *Life with Father* and De La Roche's *Jalna*? If you do, chances are you're making a big mistake.

It's not that these aren't good books. Nor is the trouble that they are too new or too old. Your mistake is that you are recommending the wrong books to the wrong people.

For years librarians have preached but not always practised the importance of providing the right book for the right reader at the right time. They have blazoned this motto over the doorways of their libraries and they have fervently prayed that they were carrying it out most of the time. However, it takes more than banners and prayers to get the right book to the right reader at the right time. It takes some psychology and some sharp observation as well.

Several years ago Gilbert Highet wrote an interesting little book on *The Art of Teaching*. In it he offered some hints to help the teacher recognize a few of the main types of students he would be bound to run into year after year. Highet based his hints on the research which W. H. Sheldon did while he was at the University of Chicago.

Sheldon has described his experiments in his *Varieties of Temperament*. What he did was this. He took complete physical measurements of several thousand students and then made careful psychological studies of the character and habits of two hundred of them. He wanted to find out if there was any correlation between their physical appearance and their personalities. He found that there was and that certain types of physique are usually accompanied by definite personality traits.

Sheldon identified three main types. The first he called viscerotonic. The students in this group were inclined to be fat and lazy. The second he called somatotonic. The students in this group were athletic. They had broad shoulders, narrow hips, and a boundless supply of energy. They were aggressive, loud-mouthed and energetic. The third type he labelled cerebrotonic. The students in this group were thin, clever, sensitive and nervous. They were alert, easily upset, and often solitary.

When Sheldon studied the temperaments of these three types of students he found that each physical type had its own distinctive temperament. He discovered that the fat and lazy students were ceremonious in their behaviour, enjoyed family life, and smoked big cigars. He found

that the athletic students had simple but emphatic likes and dislikes, that they were impulsive and accident prone, and that they were liable to commit crimes of violence. The thin and wiry students turned out to be over-anxious, highly sensitive, poor sleepers, and haters of plans and routines.

In brief, the first type was characterized by enjoyment, the second type by action, and the third by thought. Obviously, these main types are extreme types and so are easily identifiable. Most of us are not all viscerotonic or somatotonic or cerebrotonic, but a combination of several types. Sheldon found that many students fall somewhere between one and another of the three main types. However, even then it was possible to predict basic behaviour patterns and to gain some insight into the way a particular individual would behave or react.

Hight pointed out that the importance of all this to a teacher was pretty obvious. A knowledge of the three main types would enable him to size up his students fairly well. It would make it easier for him to adapt lessons and assignments to each individual and it would tell him what kind of work or reaction to expect from each student.

Hight was quick to point out that there are always a few eccentric students in every class—students who never react the same way twice and who never behave as they are supposed to. These are the students who refuse to conform to any type and who belong in a class all their own. About all you can say about them is that they don't behave like anyone else.

Now what has all this to do with the librarian who wants to give the right book to the right reader at the right time? The answer seems pretty evident. Like the teacher, the librarian can make use of the findings of the psychologist in his everyday work. It is easy now to see why the fat and jolly man with a cigar in his hand should not be given Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies* unless he asks for it. It's not his type of book. He will not enjoy Ruskin's thoughtful analysis of word roots nor will he be sensitive to Ruskin's rich and mellifluous style.

What this stout and gay man needs is Clarence Day's *Life with Father* or De La Roche's *Jalna*. We know that he is interested in family life, that he likes a good joke, and that he wants a book which won't tax his mind too much. He wants to be entertained; he wants to enjoy the book he reads.

The thin, nervous man on the other hand, wants a book which will make him think. He wants a book that is full of ideas and that is well written. He will be sensitive to its style and he will delight in the bright thoughts which flash back and forth across its pages. Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* or Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies* should have been given to this man. He would have enjoyed them. He would have been sensitive to their rich style and to their delicate shades of thought and interpretation.

The middle type of reader, the type which Sheldon called somatotonic, will want a book that is full of action, one that has a hard hitting plot and terse sentences. Raymond Chandler's *Lady in the Lake* would probably be just his dish, or Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*. He won't be interested in a book that is full of finely shaded thoughts, nor will he want one about family life unless it is brimming over with tension.

In non-fiction the somatotonic will take to Heyerdahl's *Kon-Tiki* or Herzog's *Annapurna* like a duck to water. This kind of book was written for him.

All of this doesn't mean that the fat man would never enjoy *Sesame and Lilies*, or that the athletic reader would never get any pleasure out of

Life with Father or *Cheaper by the Dozen*. As Sheldon discovered, most people are a combination of several types. The man who is neither fat nor thin, who is not aggressive but not timid either, may like *Sesame and Lilies* and *A Farewell to Arms* and *Kon-Tiki*. But such a reader makes the librarian's job easier, not harder. With such a person the librarian has a much better chance of picking out the right book the first time.

There is still another way in which the librarian can bring psychology into the library. Robert Plank, a Cleveland psychiatric social worker, recently reported in the *International Record of Medicine and General Practice Clinics* that many science-fiction plots reveal "schizophrenic manifestations" in the minds of their authors. According to Plank, science-fiction readers also suffer from repressed desires. They let off steam harmlessly when they bury themselves in the latest jet-propelled space opera.

Plank says that "episodes of space travel are by no means rare in the imaginings of the mentally ill." Of special importance is the last man theme, in which everyone is wiped off the earth except the hero—and perhaps one beautiful girl. Plank says such wishful thinking goes clear back to Greek mythology. The space cadets have jazzed up the form of such dreams but not altered their contents. Such standard schizophrenic symptoms as delusions of grandeur, of persecution, and of superhuman influence are science-fiction staples.

Plank doesn't go so far as to say that science-fiction authors are crazy because they dream up schizophrenic plots. He believes that they create such plots to satisfy their readers. In a way science-fiction authors are simply following a trend that has grown out of our highly-mechanized civilization.

So the next time a science-fiction fan checks out his fifth Heinlein book that week, don't raise your eyebrows but file the fact away in the back of your mind for future reference. Perhaps what this reader needs is not more fiction but more science—psychiatry, that is. The librarian who carefully studies the reading habits of his patrons can learn a great deal about them. Some of what he learns in this way can be used to help his readers as individuals and some can be used to help them find just the right book the next time they come to the library.

This brings us to the subject of bibliotherapy. A great deal has been written about the value of bibliotherapy in hospitals and asylums. Much of what has been written, it must be admitted, is controversial and confusing. One writer claims that books on psychoanalysis must be kept out of the hands of psychiatric patients because they are too apt to disturb and upset them. On the other hand, another writer says that various experiments have shown that this is not true at all. In one hospital, patients were allowed to read any book they wanted. Here the librarian discovered that patients stayed away from the books which would otherwise have been denied them. In this experiment, the librarian found that the patients turned out to be their own best censors.

Since there is still so much controversy about bibliotherapy for the ill it is no wonder that we have not yet started to think about bibliotherapy for the well. Just as we still know too little about the psychology of the normal person, so do we know too little about the value of bibliotherapy for the healthy person.

One might logically ask, Why does the healthy person need bibliotherapy? About the same answer should be given as to the question, Why does a healthy person need a proper diet? So he will remain healthy. We all suffer from moods and fits of depression—even the healthiest of

us have our little ups and downs. Several years ago a study was made of a group of normal people with apparently stable personalities. However, it was found that even these people went through certain emotional cycles. The time between their ups and downs varied, but they all had them.

The psychologists who made this study advised these people to take advantage of their emotional highs and lows and not fight against them. They counselled them to be cautious when they were feeling on top of the world, for then they were most apt to over-estimate their abilities. And they advised them not to feel too sad when they hit bottom, for life really wasn't as bad as it seemed.

This approach may be too complicated for librarians. They may never get to know their patrons well enough to recognize whether they are on the upswing or downswing of their emotional life. The librarian can probably never have such a clear insight into the lives of his patrons. Nevertheless, these studies show what could be done if the librarian tried to make the best use of psychology in the library. They give some hint of the use which might be made of bibliotherapy for the normal as well as for the abnormal.

I KEPT MY ENGLISH ACCENT

IMPRESSIONS OF LIBRARIANSHIP IN ILLINOIS

MONICA O. WEBSTER.

I JOINED the staff of the Illinois State Library as an "exchange librarian" in November, 1953, and stayed until May, 1954. Most of the time I spent at the headquarters library at Springfield, the state capital. Springfield is a pleasant town of 80,000 people, famous for its connection with Abraham Lincoln, and is in the heart of the rich corn-growing land of the Middle West. The chief functions of the State Library are to acquire and preserve state archives, maintain a library for the legislature and state employees, and to supplement local libraries by loans of individual books and collections. The library also acts in an advisory capacity to local librarians and boards of trustees, arranges exhibitions, sends out speakers, etc. The library occupies part of the imposing Centennial Building next to the Capitol and is connected to the Archives Building and the Capital by underground tunnels. Like most libraries it is overcrowded and suffers through having departments scattered on various floors throughout the building. It is a closed library, though a great many reference books are kept on the open shelves in the reading room.

When I arrived I was told that I would be treated like a book, starting off with a week in the ordering department and working my way through cataloguing, accessioning, processing, etc., until I arrived in the public departments. This was a good scheme as it enabled me to get a complete picture of the work of the library, and incidentally it was much better to meet the staff like this gradually rather than to be introduced to them "en masse". I was quite proud of the fact that by the time I left I knew all the 125 by name, though I must confess that the American habit of using first names helped me considerably.

I soon found that American librarians are much more publicity-minded than their British colleagues. The first day I arrived my photograph was taken from several different angles with the Secretary of State, who is also the State Librarian. This was sent to American library periodicals and the local press, together with an article on my visit. I broadcast twice during my stay, appeared on television on Christmas

Day, and gave so many talks that I soon lost count of the number.

I had been prepared for American high-pressure living, and certainly my working schedule and social engagements left no time for boredom. Not being a public library, we worked ordinary office hours (8.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. in America). I never quite got used to starting off on expeditions at 8 a.m. or earlier and even meeting people for breakfast at this unearthly hour. We had no break for "elevenses" or afternoon tea, but I was given a special dispensation to go to the coffee stall as they quite realized that no English person can exist without these necessities of life.

The library had a large gramophone record department, both long-playing and 78s, an art department which lent pictures, viewmaster reels and flannelgraphs, and an adult education department which organized reading courses for which certificates were given. Films were borrowed from the state university library. I particularly enjoyed my weeks at the loan desk as it gave me a chance to meet the public. The assistants not only fetched books from the stacks and charged them out but also dealt with reference questions which often involved a considerable amount of research. Shelving was done by the stack boys who were all coloured, and the carding of returned books was done in another department. Most of the readers had been trained at school to use the card catalogue and the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature and they filled in call slips for the books required. The telephone is used much more in American libraries, probably because almost every American home has a telephone. We answered a number of reference questions by phone and telephoned readers instead of sending cards for overdue and reserved books. I was told that the telephone is a mixed blessing in public libraries as they are deluged with requests to answer the latest radio and T.V. quiz questions.

I had to learn a whole new vocabulary in the library as well as out of it—book trolleys were trucks, the issue was the circulation, readers were referred to as patrons, queries were sticklers. The readers greeted us with "Hi" or (more formally) "Hello". They were fascinated by my English accent and never seemed to be in too much of a hurry to stay and "visit" with me. Everywhere I found much interest in England and the English.

During the last two months I was assigned to the Extension Department and covered hundreds of miles in the library station-waggon visiting public libraries throughout the state, as well as hospital, school and college libraries. I found a great many small independent libraries owing to the large number of small separate local government units, indeed 58 per cent of the libraries in Illinois serve populations of under 5,000. It is not surprising that many of these public libraries have old, out-of-date stocks and unqualified staff. Many of them are in Carnegie buildings with sweeping staircases, vast entrance halls and dreary news-rooms, the lending library stacks being crowded together behind the issue desk. I saw basements full of junk which I longed to discard. Few of these libraries have money for modernization schemes and I felt their only hope lay in some scheme of amalgamation or co-operation on a county or regional basis. In spite of their low funds, some of these small libraries indulge in gramophone record collections.

There is usually no limit on the number of books which can be borrowed at one time; this system is made possible by the charging machines which are common even in small libraries. I did not see our pocket and ticket system anywhere. Circulation figures generally seem to be lower than in England, though the non-fiction percentage is higher. The Lincoln Public Library at Springfield has the highest issues in the

(contd. from p. 24).

state outside Chicago and 50 per cent. of these are non-fiction. Incidentally, Springfield is a fine example of what can be done with an old Carnegie building, it was the best medium-sized library I visited. Even the small public libraries take a great many more periodicals than in England, probably because they have many more periodical indexes which are kept up-to-date. The children's rooms are almost always bright and attractive. I was told that outside pressure from the schools forces the public libraries to give a good service to children. Rental collections are common, in some cases they are maintained by the library, in others the books are hired from a circulating library. Fines are high by British standards and I was told in one college library that a student cannot get his degree until he has returned all his books and paid his fines.

Like most travellers, I find that it is the small things which stay in my memory. I may forget the Statue of Liberty and Niagara Falls, but I shall always remember the girls on roller skates in the stock room of a bindery, the aquaria and budgerigars in so many junior libraries, the rocking chairs in the reading room at a mental hospital library, but above all I shall never forget the wonderful welcome which was given to me by all the Americans I met inside and outside libraries.

A PROFESSIONAL MEETING IN THE U.S.A.

LUCIE R. STONE, *Bookmobile Librarian, Elkhart, Indiana.*

AS I SAT DOWN to lunch (dress show inclusive) at Block's Department Store in Indianapolis during the last week in September, my thoughts travelled back to meals at Bobby's and Beal's in similar circumstances, in Bournemouth. Instead of anticipating a Library Association Conference, this was to be my first annual conference of a library association in the U.S.A., the Indiana Library Association Convention of 1954, its 63rd! How was it going to compare with conferences "back in the old country"? I knew at the outset of some variations I could expect, for I had attended district meetings of Middle West associations, as well as served in three American public libraries.

The difference in the proportion of the sexes was the first thing to come to my mind. In Indiana, for instance, there are 243 public libraries 230 of which are headed by women, so it would be likely that there would be more women delegates than men. Feminine employees in Indiana libraries number 681 as against 38, whereas the last time I made a count of the L.A. register it was fifty-fifty. In my early days at Library Association conferences I was one woman in a party of fifteen to twenty men, because senior posts are most often held by men in Britain. Then, the state of Indiana is about two-thirds of the size of England and Wales, and its population is approximately four millions. These facts indicated to me that there should be a good representation from all areas of the state as no one need travel more than 150-200 miles to Indianapolis, in the centre of the state. Yet numbers would be much less than in Britain because this group served about one-twelfth of the population that British librarians serve. Perhaps there would be a gathering comparable in size to the North Western or Home Counties Branches. It transpired that, at Indianapolis, there were 289 women and 46 men, some of the latter being exhibitors or board members.

Another difference would no doubt result from the number of small libraries in Indiana, as in the United States, generally. Indiana has 138

libraries serving communities of less than 5,000 persons, and many of such places cannot afford the salary of a professional librarian. This would probably affect the character of the meetings. A study of the programme showed that there would be more coming and going between divisions than is usual at L.A. meetings. The dinner meeting of the Special Libraries Association, as an example, was "open to all registrants and visitors", as were most of the assemblies. It was apparent, too, that this association did not regard itself as a self-sufficient entity, for amongst the speakers were to be several from the outside world, from business, industry and university. Quite obviously, American librarians consider they can learn from commercial as well as academic sources.

How did it all turn out? Little time was wasted on formalities—no receptions, no Mayor's welcome, no president's address, and even the dinners were not graced by that attire which we were wont to feel essential to the dignity of such an event. The only social activity was square dancing, and the lack of more meant that one had little opportunity to become acquainted with one's unknown confreres—and in this phase how I missed the fatherly oversight which my former chiefs in England had given to me, introducing me to everyone around! But meetings went on apace. The business sessions showed that much lively work had taken place in the previous twelve months, and that the association was alive to its responsibilities. Reports were received from the following committees:—Association archives; Federal relations; FOCUS on Indiana Libraries (the organ of the association); Intellectual freedom; Membership; Public relations; Recruiting; Scholarship and loans fund; Nominating; as well as from Joint Committees of Librarians and Trustees (i.e., members of boards) on District Meetings, Legislation; and Library Action. May-be one of the most important outcomes from these reports was the decision to work for a survey of the library situation in the State, and devise standards to fit local needs as well as bring service to areas lacking it. There is no co-ordination in salaries, budgets, or provisions at the present time.

One of the two "inspirational" meetings was addressed by Dr. Harry Schachter, with the title of "That all may read." Here was a most successful business man and industrialist animated by a great desire to bring to the poor and often illiterate people in the hills of Kentucky, a supply of books, which it appeared on the surface they could never afford through taxes or any other means. At the outset he criticized the public relations schemes, or lack of them, of public librarianship, and although he praised them as a lively and inspired group, he felt that librarians individually were too retiring and modest. Dr. Schachter told vividly of his negotiations, step by step. He told of how he brought the wealthy and the poverty line groups in to help—in some instances the limit imposed on the size of the gift was a dime (7½d.), and others were asked for no less than a bookmobile. With these masterly schemes his plans finally culminated in the provision of 97 bookmobiles, with stock, for the State of Kentucky.

There were other meetings of a more humdrum nature—"Periodicals—their selection, receiving and indexing" (College and Universities section); "Community services in adult education"; "Summer reading programmes" (Children's Librarians Round Table); and a talk on training by the Personnel Officer of a large department store. One of the most informative sessions was that on the subject of the first R, dealing with the recently developed methods of the "speeding of reading" at the same time as increasing comprehension. Unfortunately it was not possible to take in every gathering and the Junior Members Round Table

Luncheon (the equivalent, if such is within the scope of the imagination, of the A.A.L.), the Small Libraries section on "What makes them [children's books] last?", and "Book selection in special fields" for Large and Medium Libraries section, were missed. There was an excellent exhibition of library supplies set up by 27 firms, who devised a splendid scheme to ensure a good attendance, by giving a present to the 27 owners of cards completed with 27 exhibitors' signatures, drawn from a box of such, deposited by diligent librarians.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 1955

PRELIMINARY NOTICE.

The 1955 Annual General Meeting will be held at Chaucer House, Malet Place, London, W.C.1, on Wednesday, May 4th. Full programme and agenda will be published in the April issue of the *Assistant Librarian*.

Notices of motion for this meeting must be submitted in writing, signed by two members of the Association, to reach me within twelve days of the publication of this notice.

E. E. MOON,
Hon. Secretary.

CENTRAL LIBRARY,
DUKE'S AVENUE,
CHISWICK, W.4.

Berkshire Bookbinding Co., Ltd.

(Directors J. E. Cook and P. E. Cook)

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS

NON - FICTION AND
REFERENCE BINDINGS
ARE OUR SPECIALITY

27, ELDON TERRACE
READING, BERKS.

Telephone: Reading 60688.

CRAMERS for MUSIC

MUSICAL LITERATURE
AND MUSIC BINDING

139, New Bond Street
London, W.1

★ Special Music Enquiry Bureau



On 1.1.55
Vol. No. X
started

If your Library
still lacks

KEESING'S

this is a good
opportunity for
joining the service

BOOKS FOR STUDENTS

THORNTON, J. L., and TULLY, R. I. J., *Scientific books, libraries and collectors: a study of bibliography and the book trade in relation to science*, 1954. x, 288pp. (The Library Association, 24s. (18s. to members)).

Until recently, only historians and a small number of scientists studied the great classics of science. The results of these works, it was held, were incorporated in current science, and the originals could safely be ignored. It is true that science has largely advanced in ignorance of all but its immediate past, but this neglect of history is to-day being overcome. Science is the means by which our civilization is rapidly being transformed, and it is growing by leaps and bounds. To understand, and still more, to direct its growth, it is becoming essential to study the course of its development. Working scientists like Andrade, Bernal and Needham (to give a few contemporary British names) are turning to history.

The first requirement in any fresh assessment of the history of science is a study of the original sources. The student (and the librarian who serves him) is immediately faced with the fact that very few scientific histories give adequate bibliographical references. There are a few very detailed bibliographies for particular periods, but none in English for the whole field. Mr. Thornton has already provided a most useful guide to medical writings, and now, with his collaboration, he has put us further in his debt by publishing this companion book on science.

In it the reader will find a very solid survey of the words of leading scientists from the time of Ancient Egypt to the end of the nineteenth century. The full name, life-dates and a few lines of bibliography for each scientist are followed by the titles and editions of each of his major books. Many biographies and bibliographical studies are cited. Special chapters are devoted to the rise of the scientific societies, to periodicals, bibliographies, libraries, publishers and booksellers. There is a bibliography of over 600 items and an adequate index.

The analysis of the growth of scientific literature—its changing forms and the problems they have created—is a study which has barely begun. The authors do not attempt such a critique, but they have provided indispensable material for such a study—a wealth of information which is otherwise accessible only at the expense of much research. Every librarian who aspires to an acquaintance with scientific literature should be familiar with this book, and every reference library should have a copy handy.

B. C. VICKERY.

PIGGOTT, MARY, ed. *Cataloguing principles and practice: an inquiry*. Lectures delivered at a vacation course of the University School of Librarianship and Archives in March, 1953. 1954. viii, 159pp. (The Library Association, 14s. (10s. 6d. to members)).

The lectures which form this survey of British cataloguing were based upon an inquiry carried out by questionnaire. Unfortunately, the sample which resulted was small and the statistical analysis which forms the appendix is, therefore, only of limited authority. However, the lectures themselves, supplemented by detailed references, provide excellent background reading for students of cataloguing.

Mr. Sharp on current research, Mr. Francis and Mr. Chaplin on a reconsideration of the *British Museum Rules* and Mr. Wells on the *British*

National Bibliography not only manage to be informative but give the reader the impression of being taken behind the scenes. The result is a contribution to the literature of cataloguing which will provide excellent background reading useful to Registration students and essential to those taking Advanced Cataloguing.

There is an especially useful chapter on cataloguing in university libraries by R. S. Mortimer, which, better than any of the other lectures on cataloguing in particular types of libraries, produces a survey of problems and practice which is really informative. The county library lecture is rather brief and is based on a very small sample, but is a useful reminder of the diversity of county library cataloguing problems.

Unfortunately, the lecture on cataloguing in municipal libraries is out of step with the remainder of the survey. Had this been submitted as an answer in a correspondence course, I feel it would have been endorsed "Stick to the question as set. Do not introduce irrelevant or unsupported statements". An example of this cause for complaint is provided by the two following consecutive sentences. "Costs in British municipal libraries run as high as 6s. per title and 4s. 6d. per volume. We cannot afford to supplement these costs with additional salaries for service staff to interpret the catalogue." It is unfortunate that this section did not receive the same treatment as university cataloguing. The fact that the author admits bias merely underlines the fact that a valuable opportunity has been lost where the need for an informative survey was greatest.

In the main, Miss Piggott and her team are to be congratulated not only on what has been done, but on the way in which it has been presented. The fact that there are differences of opinion on the same or similar problems enhances the value of the inquiry as a starting point—or as a milestone at which British cataloguers might well stop and think—providing they think quickly.

W. TYNEMOUTH.

THOMSON, JEAN, ed. *Books for Boys and Girls*. 3rd ed., 1954. (Toronto, Ryerson Press, \$7.50).

The reputation of the Boys' and Girls' Division of the Toronto Public Libraries has been built up largely on the thought and care expended on book selection, a subject most helpfully discussed by Miss Lillian Smith in *The Unreluctant Years* published in 1953 by the American Library Association. That this third edition of *Books for Boys and Girls* edited by Miss Smith's successor as Head of the Division, does not entirely succeed in implementing the principles laid down by her predecessor is due, in the main, to insufficient liaison between the English and Canadian book-trades rather than to any lack of care on the part of Miss Thomson and her staff.

In Toronto, the new is suspect, and though Miss Thomson claims to "balance the old with the new," the bulk of the entries, particularly those for fiction, are for books published before 1940; there are five entries for Mrs. Ewing, only two for Miss Streatfeild.

It is inevitable that the compilers of book-lists should lay themselves open to indignant comments about their inclusions and exclusions, but after every allowance has been made for the non-availability of some English titles in Canada and the different interests of children on opposite sides of the Atlantic, a book stock which excludes such titles as Eve Garnett's *Family from One-end Street*, Elfrida Vipont's *Lark on the wing*, Kathleen Hale's *Orlando* books and Alison Uttley's *Sam Pig* and

Tim Rabbit stories is robbing Canadian childhood of some of the richness and colour of English children's literature.

Much of the non-fiction selection seems a little arbitrary to English eyes, for instance, Aistrop: *Every child's book of pets*, is included; Shaw and Fisher: *Animals as friends and how to keep them*, and Knight: *Pets, usual and unusual*, are not; this and other such omissions may well be due to the vagaries of the book trade, but it lessens the value of the list for English libraries.

Titles in the "Lands and people" section bring home once more to English librarians the much greater richness of American children's literature in this field.

The annotations, arrangement and decoration of this book-list are all that can be desired, each entry has obviously received careful individual attention, but the high honour in which Toronto is held makes us more critical of her publications than we would be of those of less notable libraries, and so we would most humbly suggest that before a further edition of this most valuable work appears, Miss Thomson or one of her assistants should visit England to study the whole range of modern English children's books at first hand.

JOAN W. BUTLER.

CORRESPONDENCE

FINES

It pains me to have to disagree with my colleague, Mr. Shearman, over the man who refuses to pay his fine; but really, Tony! In nine years of librarianship I have never met anyone who refused to pay "on principle"; when I do, I shall show him his signed undertaking to abide by the library's regulations. Refusers always think they have a legitimate grievance, or at any rate one worth trying on. "It *can't* be overdue, because to-day is Saturday and I always come in on a Saturday"; "You stamped this so badly last time that I couldn't see if it was a three or a five"; "I came last week and you were closed." Now, if I am unlucky enough to be standing in a queue witnessing the development of a first-class row just in front, I am more likely to think it is an unjust world if the argument causes me to miss my bus than on any other count. I should applaud the good sense of the assistant who, with right on his side, contents himself with pointing it out and then concludes the affair swiftly by adopting the silently-handing-over technique. (Should he also be a Lifeman, this places him one up). Com-

ing to my turn in the queue, I then "find I have to pay a fine, too." Well, if the date is clearly stamped on the label and the library calendar is prominently displayed, where is my grouse? The man in front of me had some reason for questioning his fine: if I thought I had, I should question it, too.

MARY PEARCE,

Deputy Branch Librarian, Bucks. Co.L.

NATIONAL ELECTIONS

Mr. Bristow, in his Presidential New Year's message, comments on the lack of youthful candidates for election as National Councillors. The reasons for this should not be hard to find. Few people are willing to put up for election unless they stand a reasonable chance of success and, judging from the results over the past three years, the electorate at large are unwilling to swop the devil they know for his opposite number. Few of us have the courage to risk being slapped down thrice running (as has happened to Mr. Enser), nor were the results last year particularly encouraging when seven new names managed to gain one seat between them

(that vacated by Mr. Tighe) and failed to shake a single one of the retiring members seeking re-election.

Of the six National Councillors who served last year and have been re-elected for 1955, four work in large city systems, whilst the remaining two come from Metropolitan boroughs. This fact is surely not without significance and may well cause the would-be Councillor from a small library to think twice before putting up for election even if he can spare the time and, what is even more important, if his library is willing and able to spare him on those days that the A.A.L. Council meets.

I don't think that much can be done about all this and, personally, I am quite happy with the present state of our Council. If, however, as the President seems to imply, some of our "aged" Councillors are only too willing to step aside and make way for new ideas, I suggest that if the fact were made known before nomination date that several Councillors were retiring for good, the young bloods of the profession might be persuaded to scrap amongst themselves for the vacant seats.

P. D. POCKLINGTON,
Chief Assistant, Chelmsford P.L.

CATALOGUING RULES

The *cri de coeur* from Miss Catherine R. Morton will, I trust, awake many answering echoes from fellow sufferers, but alas! is the solution as simple as she naively supposes? Having taught cataloguing for the last twenty years I am quite firmly of the opinion that the apathy towards this subject among English librarians in general and the Library Association in particular is more than sufficient to prevent anything ever being done in this country about cataloguing rule revision. Else, why after 46 years are we still without a revised Joint-Code and any set of subject rules other than those of Cutter, which are older even than the Joint-Code? It is true that there is in existence a Cataloguing Rules Sub-Committee of the Library

Association, but every year it tries to conceal its inaction and lack of ideas by a series of feeble platitudes. The same spirit was manifest by Mr. H. A. Sharp in reporting progress (!) at the Inquiry on Cataloguing Principles and Practice at the London University School of Librarianship two years ago. Any pretence of Anglo-American co-operation on cataloguing rules was shattered by the independent action of our American colleagues in producing the 2nd edition of their rules provisionally in 1941 and definitely in 1949. We can't blame the war for this. Thirty-one years had already elapsed with nothing done.

E. O. REED,
Borough Librarian, Chelmsford.

IDEAS ON TEACHING

I am unimpressed by the criticisms of my article "Ideas on Teaching" which appeared in the January issue. As I also have passed three parts of the Registration examination, Mrs. Firth must not assume that I wrote in pique at failure. Now, these examinations over, I see plainly how I should have studied, hence my suggestions.

I fear that Miss Wilden-Hart's and Mr. Hope's objections to the fact that repetition is the psychological basis of memory are emotional ones. "Repetition" calls up "parrot-fashion" to them. Yet how often do they themselves go over material for an examination? Let us take English literature, as Mr. Hope does. He's heard of Milton before the lectures. The lecturer speaks of Milton. Mr. Hope reads his Compton-Rickett. If he only revises *once* before his examination, then he has already revised as often as the four times I suggest. Then why not do the whole thing systematically? Repetition ensures learning. We know our names by repetition, know our way home by repetition, know the Dewey system, etc. The information must be in one's head on examination day, not in one's notebook. And to assure the examiner of one's passionate interest in the

subject is not enough.

Are we librarians a pack of pious, platitudinous, hypocrites? Every month in the *Assistant Librarian*, I read letters and articles boasting of their writers' "senses of vocation," and stressing that they do, and everyone else should, study, not to pass examinations and make more money, but out of sheer, disinterested interest.

I will put my foot in it even further and suggest that if the student really wants to pass his examinations, then he has no time to be interested in his subjects. Indeed, it is very dangerous for him. In the English literature examination, his business is to ascertain the stock opinions on the great writers and to tell these to the examiners. He must learn the chestnut questions and the chestnut answers. The examiner doesn't want to be told that Peter Cheyney is a greater writer than Shakespeare, even if the candidates does think so.

Many, unfortunately, hope to pass

examinations merely by supplementing lectures by occasional essays, and "that chapter in X's textbook" every week. Some of these, like myself, even pass. That need not worry the purists. More is learned from lectures than books, for there is the chance to ask questions and because lecturers are more repetitive than authors.

After the examinations have been passed, most people forget a good half of what they learn, and only recall it when, on the strength of those magic letters A.L.A. after their names, they get a new job which involves actually doing what they once learned.

N. LANCASHIRE,

Assistant, Greenwich P.L.

BIRKBECK COLLEGE
(University of London).

Session 1955-1956 begins
Monday, October 3rd, 1955.

Part-time (Evening) Courses provided for Internal Degrees in the Faculties of Arts and Science and for the Academic Post-Graduate Diploma in Psychology. Facilities are provided for part-time and full-time students reading for Higher Degrees in Arts and Science.

Application for admission should be made before 1st June. *Pamphlet and form of application may be obtained from the Registrar, Birkbeck College, Malet Street, W.C.1.*

A.A.L. CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

Students are reminded that completed application forms, together with the appropriate fees, for the courses beginning in March and April, must reach Mrs. L. Martin, Carnegie Library, Herne Hill Road, London, S.E.24, on or before 28th February, 1955, after which date no application will be considered. Earlier receipt is advisable and would be greatly appreciated.

Full particulars of the courses offered are given in the current *Students' Handbook*.

Revision Courses. A limited number of *Registration* and *Final* courses are available to run from March to June. These short period courses are reserved exclusively for those students who have already sat the examination in the subjects required.

Applications will be accepted up to one week after publication of the examination results, when this is later than 28th February.

Fees. The fee per course is £2 7s. 6d., plus 10s. extra to students in Africa, America, Asia and Australasia.

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 48. No. 3

MARCH, 1955

EDITORIAL

HOW CAN the future biographer of T. E. Lawrence be expected to know of the great mass of reminiscences and anecdotes now scattered throughout the correspondence columns of the national press, following reviews of Richard Aldington's recent book? He will get to it in the end, perhaps, via the *Times* index and the reviews themselves, but what a busy month he must then spend at Colindale searching for his material through the other un-indexed files. Clearly there is a need for a comprehensive index to the contents, other than news, of our national newspapers. Significant news reports, which are necessarily arranged chronologically, can usually be traced—in spite of its own rather cumbersome index—via Keesings, and larger libraries will again have recourse to the *Times* index. What is needed now is something far wider than the “index to important articles in newspapers and periodicals” called for by the 1950 Unesco conference, and we offer the suggestion, for what it is worth, to Keesings themselves as one of a number of organizations which appear to have the resources necessary for such an undertaking.

Although Verner Clapp's ideal of a comprehensive service covering books, periodicals and other publications may indeed be impractical, as argued by Mr. Staveley in his most stimulating book on these and many other related problems*, yet it does seem possible that the field could be broken up into not too many smaller plots, each capable of being worked separately with at least worthwhile results. We have referred already to newspapers; other periodicals are covered by a number of indexes, both special and general, including the L.A. *Subject Index to Periodicals*. But it is apparently assumed that the contents of books can be adequately displayed by the cataloguer. This may be true of the monograph or the book on a severely restricted subject, but a reading of that interesting piece of reporting by Julian Huxley, *From an antique land*, has reminded us once again of the total inadequacy of present indexing and cataloguing services in dealing with books of a discursive nature.

Some of the material in Professor Huxley's book has appeared in the form of articles in a number of periodicals, and some of these articles—those appearing in the *Geographical Magazine* and *History To-day*—are presumably represented by entries in the *Subject Index to Periodicals*. Some of the material on Byblos and Palmyra, therefore, will by this merest chance be brought to the notice of the student or librarian following accustomed lines of enquiry. Other articles had the misfortune to be published in periodicals not covered by the *Subject index*, and the vast bulk of the material has of course never appeared at all in periodical form. Though no whit less interesting in itself, it will receive no such treatment as the chapters on Byblos and Palmyra, and it is highly improbable that any library will accord it a separate catalogue entry. The B.N.B., at all events, is content with the single entry 915.[1].

Following this line of thought, we examined the book a little more

**Notes on modern bibliography*, 1954. L.A., 10s. (7s. 6d. to members).

closely and found passages on the following subjects to which a student might well be glad to have his attention drawn :—

The Venus and Adonis legend.
The evolution of alphabets.
Origins of civilization.
The Druzes.
Dancing Dervishes.
The murex purple dye industry.
Pyramids—and pyramidology.

It is not suggested that in all, or indeed in many, of these passages Professor Huxley adds materially to the sum of human knowledge. Most of the information contained in them can be found elsewhere and he acknowledges many debts, including a considerable one to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. But we well know that even the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* can fail us in our hour of need, and other alternative sources will not always be available when required. Furthermore, Professor Huxley is a man whose views on such matters as the evolution of alphabets and the origins of civilization cannot fail to be of interest to those who come after.

Analytical cataloguing, like union cataloguing and indeed cataloguing of any sort, sounds all very well in theory but it falls far short of our needs in practice. Too great reliance on the classification scheme to reveal material in books on related or more general subjects results, even in a small library, in much of that material being overlooked. It is *rather* unreasonable to expect the reader interested in Dancing Dervishes to search through all the books on the Middle East for his references. It is *quite* unreasonable to expect him to guess which of the books at present on loan might contain suitable material and therefore be worth reserving. It is no less unreasonable to expect an overworked staff to carry out the extensive examination of returned books which would be required to produce it, and the library catalogue which contained an added entry for the two pages on Dancing Dervishes in Professor Huxley's book—and others on a similar scale—would very soon outgrow the library which fed it. Ideally, as Mr. Staveley says, "a classification scheme must try to liberate as many as possible of the ideas contained in a book or document, regardless of the economics of normal catalogue-building," but the economics of normal catalogue-building are ever in our minds.

It is suggested, therefore, that there is room for yet another indexing service—a subject index to new books, which would reveal that *Fact, fake or fable?* by Rupert Furneaux discusses, among other problems, the authenticity of the Kensington Rune Stone and the site of Golgotha, and that A. W. Boyd's *A country parish* contains the full text, with many photographs, of a Mummers' Play. It is impossible to determine how far such indexing could usefully be extended. An examination of recent issues of the BNB suggests that some 40 to 50 books are published each week of a sufficiently discursive nature to justify indexing, and this includes all the biography and most travel and topography, for there is no knowing what such books will reveal.

Discursive books within a particular subject field present a separate problem which must also be faced one day. The task is by no means an impossible one. The BNB, *Subject index to periodicals* and *Fiction index* suggest three possible approaches. Half a dozen enthusiastic souls, each working in one of the "provincial British Museums," could do all that is needed. The snag lies in the fact that four or five hundred equally enthusiastic librarians would be needed to support and make use of their efforts.

EIN KLEINER NACHTMAHR

A SMALL SEARCH, FOR GERMAN BIBLIOGRAPHY

by FRANK ATKINSON, *Hampstead P.L.*

EXAMINER. . . . carelessness and lack of attention to detail. Candidates exhibit confused and hazy notions of the fundamentals of German bibliography.

STUDENT. How true! We're like sheep lost in this teutonic tangle. And there's no excuse—sheep we may be, but why should we be lost? Our elders and textbook-writers will guide us. O Shepherds, speak!

ESDAILE-STOKES (1). The first twenty years of the sixteenth century are dealt with in the first section of Part II of Proctor's *Index* and in Panzer's *Annales*.

STUDENT. Ah yes—Proctor and Panzer.

ESDAILE-STOKES (2). Books in the German language up to 1526 were also described in PANZER (Georg Wolfgang F.) *Annales der altern deutschen Literatur* . . . and for the sixteenth [century] by WELLER (E.O.) *Reperitorium typographicum*, 1864. The fair catalogues, and the universal bibliographies such as Gesner and Georgi, carry on the story . . .

EXAMINER. Phrases are intended to have precise meanings . . .

STUDENT. Gesner carries on the story of books in the German language?

GESNER (3). In tribus linguis, Latina, Graeca et Hebraica . . .

STUDENT. Only in Latin, Greek and Hebrew? But . . .

ESDAILE-STOKES (4). . . . but we reach firm ground again in the eighteenth century with HEINSIUS (Wilhelm) *Allgemeines Bücher-Lexikon* . . . and KAYSER (Christian G.) *Index locupletissimus; vollständiges Bücherlexikon* . . .

FREER (5). *Vollständiges Bücher-Lexikon* . . .

ESDAILE-STOKES. *Index locupletissimus; vollständiges Bücherlexikon* . . .

WINCHELL (6). *Vollständiges Bücher-Lexikon* . . .

STUDENT. Mr. Collison?

COLLISON (7). No comment.

STUDENT. Well, never mind . . .

ESDAILE-STOKES (8) . . . which began with six volumes covering 1750-1832 . . . and continued with five-yearly volumes . . .

FREER (9) . . . each section of about 2 volumes covers about 3—6 years . . .

STUDENT. This is a little confusing . . .

ESDAILE-STOKES (10). The student must do everything he possibly can to enable him to handle the books themselves.

STUDENT. Yes, indeed.

ESDAILE-STOKES (11). HINRICHS (J. C.) *Hinrichs Halbjahrs-Katalog*, which, beginning in 1797, appeared in two slim volumes, one of authors, one of subjects. After 1916, it changed to the *Halbjahrsverzeichnis der Neuerscheinungen des deutschen Buchhandels* . . .

FREER (12). . . . it was superseded by *Halbjahrsverzeichnis der im deutschen Buchhandel erschienenen Bücher* . . .

STUDENT. How would you put it, Miss Winchell?

WINCHELL (13). *Halbjahrsverzeichnis der Neuerscheinungen des deutschen Buchhandels*. Title varies. Until 1915 it was *Hinrichs' Halbjahrs-Katalog*.

STUDENT. Neatly put, ma'am. Title varies—and so does the date apparently. What do you say, Mr. Collison? 1915? 1916? 1917?

COLLISON (14). No comment.

ESDAILE-STOKES (15). The DEUTSCHE NATIONALBIBLIOGRAPHIE was suspended in 1945. At the present time the material is being covered in

two separate publications, one for Western Germany and one for the Russian Zone.

STUDENT. Would you care to name these?

ESDAILE-STOKES (16). Titles are given as briefly as is consistent with clearly identifying them.

STUDENT. I beg your pardon. It was silly of me to ask.

WALFORD (17). A very acceptable account of German bibliography is to be found in the *Stetchert-Hafner Book News*, March, 1952.

STUDENT. Thank you so much. No entry in the *London Union List of Periodicals* for this publication, but no doubt the Library Association Library . . .

Henrik Jones (18). Yes, yes, the L.A. Library has *Stechert-Hafner Book News*—since 1954.

STUDENT. Oh dear, and the March, 1952, issue failed to reach the Westminster Reference Library . . .

WALFORD (19). Full use should be made of the excellent *Library Science Abstracts*.

STUDENT. Well now . . .

ABSTRACTOR FMJ (20). Since 1945 the *Jahresverzeichnis des Deutschen Schrifttums* continues the *Halbjahrsverzeichnis der Neuerscheinungen des Buchhandels* . . . Supplementing the above are the *Deutsche Musikbibliographie*, the *Jahresverzeichnis der Deutschen Musikalien und Musikschriften*, the quinquennial *Handbuch der Musik-literatur*, the *Bibliographie der Kunstblätter*, and the . . .

STUDENT. The frequency of some isn't clear from the titles, could you please . . .

ABSTRACTOR FMJ (21). All these bibliographies are described in great detail in the article "Die zentralen Arbeiten der Deutschen Bücherei" in *Bibliothekar*, January, 1952.

STUDENT. But I can't read German . . .

EXAMINER. . . . confused and hazy notions of the fundamentals of . . .

STUDENT. Baa, baa, baa.

REFERENCES.

1. Esdaile, Arundell. *A student's manual of bibliography*; revised by Roy Stokes. 1954. p. 328.
2. op. cit. pp. 328-329.
3. Gesner, Conrad. *Bibliotheca universalis* . . . 1545. t.p.
4. op. cit. p. 329.
5. Freer, Percy. *Bibliography and modern book production*. 1954. p. 87
6. Winchell, Constance M. *Guide to reference books*. 7th ed. 1951. p.33.
7. Collison, Robert L. *Bibliographies: subject and national*. 1951.
8. op. cit. p. 329.
9. op. cit. p. 87.
10. op. cit. p. 284.
11. op. cit. p. 329.
12. op. cit. p. 87.
13. op. cit. pp. 33-34.
14. op.cit.
15. op.cit. p. 330.
16. op. cit. p. 284.
17. Walford, A. J. *The Final Examination. Part I. Bibliography and book selection*. 1954. p. 25.
18. Word of mouth.
19. Walford, A. J. *The A.A.L. guides to professional examinations. Vol. I. Final Examination*. 1952. p. 31.
20. *Library Science Abstracts*. 1952. Abstract No. 1741.
21. Ditto.

REVALUATIONS IX

By Thomas Clearwater.

OUR LIBRARY SCHOOLS.

DURING 1954, the subject of our library schools was discussed with more than usual vigour at conferences and in the journals. We are sure that this renewed and widespread interest in the present status and future development of the library schools is some evidence that serious problems are arising and there is by no means agreement on either the exact nature of the problems or their possible solutions. In some sectors of the profession there is a good deal of feeling and even a little thought about the schools, but it is unfortunate that the opinions so formed rarely have a wider immediate audience than that to be found at the nearest saloon bar after a meeting, the cloakroom at Chaucer House and similar milieux suitable for the exchange of confidences. From the more recent pronouncements on the subject from such interested parties as R. C. Benge (L.A.R. Nov., 1954), W. B. Paton (L.A. Conference Proceedings, 1954 and L.A.R. Dec., 1954) and R. Stokes (L.A.R. Jan, 1954), one gains little of the feeling of those just as intimately concerned with the schools—the students and the chief librarians who employ them. For we think that it is from these two sources that much criticism arises—criticism that in many cases is not clearly stated in the pages of the professional press. We should remember that these two groups are in effect primary and secondary consumers of the services of the schools.

In his conference paper, Mr. Paton very properly reminds us that the Library Association brought about the initial establishment of the schools in 1946 and goes on to say that "development has rested largely with the individual authorities responsible for the running of the schools, the function of the Association being limited to one of benevolent interest in the background." This is certainly not untrue, but it is also a rather incomplete analysis of the situation. It is true that it is the *Library Association* which displays benevolent interest, for the Library Association, rightly or wrongly, does not regard itself as a teaching, but as an examining body. But clearly more than benevolent interest is needed to ensure the well-being of the schools, particularly when the local education authorities responsible for the schools look to librarians for guidance and assistance. What these authorities need is generally speaking provided by the profession—heads of schools, librarians willing to serve on advisory bodies and librarians willing to persuade their councils and governing bodies that their employees should be given leave of absence to attend courses and, of course, librarians to lecture. To some extent, therefore, the *individual members* thus provide what benevolent interest cannot and in so doing demonstrate that the library schools are largely run by us and for us.

Perhaps this sounds so obvious as to be a waste of the time taken to write and read it. But it is necessary to stress that ours is a direct responsibility. The library schools cannot be allowed either to become mere appendages of our professional education and life or to lose the broad support of librarians. Local education authorities are still, so to speak, the managers and owners, and it is certain that were the profession to consider that the schools were developing in the wrong way and had lost prestige, these authorities might well reconsider their usefulness.

We agree with Mr. Paton "that fewer, and larger, and more conveniently located schools are desirable" and would like also to draw attention to an essay (now in the Library at Chaucer House) by our indefatigable contemporary "J.F.W.B." entitled "Desiderata for a central library school" (1950) which goes a long way further. Mr. Paton thinks

that this proposal would offer "greater opportunity for the sponsoring of research projects, field work and schemes of original study." Probably it would offer such opportunities, but whether or not they are taken depends upon the solution of one of the greatest problems in the administration of the schools—the recruitment of staff adequate in quality and in numbers. The "recent attempt . . . made to formulate desirable standards in respect [of the schools'] staffing . . ." noted by Mr. Paton is, to put it mildly, overdue.

It would seem that one of the more usual means of estimating the general standing and prestige of the schools is by an assessment of the standing of their staffs. This may be unfair and illogical, but the same sort of judgment is often given to a library. It is by its chief that we tend to judge it, rarely by the opinions of its users. There are thus libraries enjoying esteem based upon the achievements of chiefs long since superannuated—achievements sometimes not equalled by their successors. It is, perhaps, as hard to get a bad name as it is a good name, but our library schools have no such history to equip them with either. An accepted place in our professional education they certainly have, but the remark "The head of such and such a school—who is he, where does he come from and what has he done?" if rarely heard (and it is heard) is seldom far from the lips of some of our schools' critics.

This is but one aspect of the needless division between those who do and those who teach, a division between the practitioners and the preachers. A further, and to us more disquieting, conflict is that between those who examine and those who teach. We are not here referring only to the occasional rumpuses between examiners and teachers which arise from varying interpretations of the syllabus and to the apparent conflicts between theory and practice, but to the difference of what we may perhaps call "calibre" between examiners and teachers as persons and as librarians. A great deal of the teaching at full-time schools and almost all the teaching at their part-time appendages and at the innumerable technical colleges throughout the country is done by what are quaintly called "visiting lecturers." A few of these are well-experienced librarians, but the majority are minor deputy librarians, branch librarians, cataloguers and the like. On the other hand, our examiners are in the main more experienced chief librarians and elder statesmen. We are well aware that both generalisations are qualified by exceptions and that eminence and experience are not the only qualities demanded of a lecturer, but we think that it is still true to say that there is an unnecessary inequality between examiners and teachers. Were it not for the students, this might be excusable, but we feel that the student is One Down to begin with. We further believe that our most experienced and able librarians have a professional duty to pass on to younger librarians the judgements gained by that experience and ability. Scarce as good textbooks are, we do not recommend their entry into this field of communication. We shall hope instead that more of them will mount the lecturer's rostrum.

We know that many full-time lecturers, particularly those who have held their posts since 1946 or 1947 are concerned at the lack of opportunity for them to keep abreast of current practice. They are discovering that it cannot be done by close reading of the *Occasional Papers* of the University of Illinois Library School, the *Journal of Documentation* and the *L.A.R.* coupled with brief visits to libraries and chats to their erstwhile colleagues. And what is worse, many of them, we are sure, are discovering that it is not easy to return to practice, that movement from

library school back to library is rare. Indeed, only Messrs. D. A. R. Kemp (of the London County Council School) and W. B. Paton (of the Scottish School) appear to have been successful in passing this hazard. The wry comment at the end of Mr. Stokes's article referred to above begins to take on greater meaning and possibly greater poignancy—"It is to be hoped that, while some members of the staff will remain in order to preserve continuity, others will pass out into the profession again and so permit of other librarians to take their place." Observe also the implication that the schools are not part of the profession.

We have dealt with the staff of the schools at some length because we think that this is the central problem. The beginnings of a solution can only be found if greater attention is paid to requirements for these posts, not the least of which is real teaching ability. It is also regrettable that the virtual non-existence of full-time Finals students denies to many lecturers the opportunity of contact with more mature and critical minds.

The need for greater cohesion between examiners and teaching institutions and for greater interest by the profession at large is illustrated by the comparatively recent emergence of such bodies as the Moderating Committees and, in London, the Standing Committee for Education in Librarianship. It cannot be said, however, that these bodies have yet become effective or that they will become so until the profession becomes aware of their existence and potentialities.

THE WELCOME WAGON

A. D. MORTIMORE, *St. Marylebone P.L.*

ALTHOUGH I HAVE no wish to join the ranks of those who say: "Oh, the Americans do so-and-so far better than we do" (indeed, the first article in my Librarians' Creed has always been that America has little of value to teach us) I must admit that I was very impressed by a casual reference in an Illinois Library School paper, which has completely converted me to the American Approach to Librarianship.

"... the letters were also given to all newcomers in the city who were visited by the welcome-wagon hostesses, who regularly present them with library registration cards." (Marianna Andres: *Practical Aspects of Photographic Charging. University of Illinois Library School Occasional Papers*, No. 39. June 1954).

Now, how many Welcome Wagon Hostesses have we in England? Not one! No library troubles to appoint someone to cover the stations, hotels, estate agencies and the many other places where newcomers may be expected to be found. At least one town provides an Information Bureau where new arrivals can find out all the amenities—cinemas, shopping centres, beauty spots, 'bus termini, etc., and one might reasonably expect that this would be an extension of the Public Library's activities. But it is not, nor does it even contain information about the library services in the area!

How are the mighty fallen, when our great English libraries, traditionally famous for their pretty assistants, cannot afford to give three or four of them a modest dress allowance and a small sports car each, and send them out to welcome the new arrival in town, or even to "spread the gospel" to people who have lived all their lives in a town and have yet to find out where the Public Library is. Can it be that we are ashamed of our book stocks? Yet a small American town with an annual issue of 150,000 treats Welcome Wagon Hostesses as if they were a natural phenomenon of librarianship.

There is certainly room for the missionary spirit in British libraries.

A trained librarian, armed with a suitable "wagon," a few thousand registration cards and advertising matter, could convert countless numbers of the heathen native population.

The Welcome Wagon clearly points the difference between the American, or positive, and the English, or negative, approach. While the American goes out into the street and tells the public what the library can do for him, we sit like mome raths in our well-heated buildings and say to ourselves: "Well, I've done my job. It's here if they want it." To the select few who know where the library is and what it offers, this is satisfactory; I have no complaint (at the moment) about the service given to such readers. But it shocks me that the unknown requirements of so many unknown residents of our communities are so completely ignored. Perhaps the operative word in Welcome Wagon is not, after all, "Wagon," but "WELCOME."

A little is being done to remedy this deficiency. Children's Librarians especially are sowing the seed in fruitful soil, disseminating knowledge of what a library is and what it does; the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research issued posters advertising Public Libraries (though the only place I saw these displayed was in D.S.I.R. itself; I wonder how many libraries applied for them?); and more recently the A.A.L. has considered issuing a poster based on Mr. Harris's cartoon in the November, 1954, issue of the *Assistant Librarian*.

This cartoon hits the nail on the head perfectly, as manual workers are for the most part the very type of persons we fail to reach. In his letter in the *Library Association Record* of December, 1954, Dr. Urquhart suggests that mechanical and technological interests are less well served in Public Libraries than in the former Mechanics' Institutes Libraries. He is right, and we must shoulder the blame. The men whose hunger for knowledge brought Mechanics' libraries into being have not degenerated into morons; rather, there is no one sufficiently interested to tell them about libraries, to encourage them to join one and so create a demand.

Advertisement of this kind seems to be one of the fundamental duties of librarians. Book Clubs and circulating libraries advertise their recreational wares, but Public Libraries, with a wealth of useful books, seem content to leave large numbers of the public unaware of these services. To them, a librarian "stamps books," *i.e.* novels. Why not tell them the truth?

Only when we are helping everyone who needs us can we say that we are doing our job; and to that end much remains to be done. The visitor in a strange town knows how difficult it is to find the library; the first half-dozen inhabitants have never heard of it, and when at last he reaches it he's lucky if the building is clearly labelled as a library. Clearly advertisement even of this sort is *infra dignitatem*, while as for advertising our resources and services in the local newspaper—quick, pass the smelling salts round the Conference Hall!

It is time we gave up our dilettante attitude of half-hearted service and told more people about our rôle as a "Teach-Yourself" type of establishment. The scope of our stock is tremendous—careers, hobbies, "make-it-yourself" ideas, different cookery methods, everything, the lot. We have so much that we can safely say that, whatever interests a person may have, sooner or later he will need a Public Library. Certainly no-one can afford to ignore our vast resources, yet we do nothing to bring those books to their attention.

More positivism, more posters, more publicity and advertising, and, ah, yes, more Welcome Wagon Hostesses.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE CASE OF FRED BLOGGS, MECHANIC.

The Council has decided not to go ahead with the production of a poster on the lines of the block used in our November issue. The original block

is, however, available for loan to any librarian who would like to have copies printed for his own use.

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION LIBRARY.

Members are reminded that the library at Chaucer House has now been transferred to attractive new premises on the third floor, and will in future be open regularly till 8 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday evenings

(except during the month of August). Hours of opening are as follows:—Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9 a.m.—6 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday, 9 a.m.—8 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.—12 noon.

THE JUNIOR ASSISTANT IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

A number of chief librarians having expressed interest in Miss Wilden-Hart's article (February issue, pp. 17-20), it has been decided to make off-prints available, at a small charge

to cover cost, to facilitate discussion at staff meetings or for distribution to future new entrants. Will any librarians wishing to have copies please communicate with the Hon. Editor.

SCHOOLS AND CONFERENCES

A.A.L. 6th ANNUAL WEEK-END CONFERENCE, APRIL 1-3.

The subject of this year's Conference (at Birmingham) will be *Selling the Library Service: Publicity and Public Relations*. For full details, please refer to the leaflet which was distributed with the February issue of the *Assistant Librarian*. If you have

not already done so, send your application immediately, or in any case not later than March 10th, to the Conference Secretary (Miss A. H. Higgs, A.L.A.), Reference Library, Birmingham, 1.

NEWBATTLE ABBEY SUMMER SCHOOL, JULY 2-9.

For those who can manage a week in July, this year's Scottish Library Association Summer School offers an attractive programme including sessions on Modern Poetry, Sir Walter Scott, The Place of the BNB in Cata-

loguing Practice, Public Speaking for Librarians, etc. Total cost for the week is £6 10s. Please address all enquiries to J. W. Cockburn, Esq., F.L.A., Central Public Library, George Street, Edinburgh, 1.

GLD REVISION SCHOOL, MARCH 30—APRIL 3.

The Greater London Division are holding a four-day residential revision school for students of Registration Group C (Organization and Administration) at Wansfell College, Theydon Bois, Essex, from Wednesday evening, 30th March, until Sunday afternoon, 3rd April. Applications should be made, with 10s. deposit, to P. D. Pocklington, Central Library, Duke Street, Chelmsford, Essex, not later

than March 15th. Fees for Essex students are 60s., and for those living outside Essex, 78s. Reduced fees are available to non-residents and to those aged 19 and under. (Under the Post Entry Training Scheme, local government students should be able to claim leave of absence with pay and the fees for the course from their authorities).

COUNCIL NOTES

JANUARY 20.

CAN YOU IMAGINE an aerial view of the City of London without the dome of St. Paul's? So unfamiliar did the platform appear at the Council's first meeting in its Diamond Jubilee year without the equally striking dome of Mr. Tynemouth, whose long and valuable service as Honorary Secretary has been justly rewarded by elevation to the office of Vice-President. (He claims to know a bit about Presidents, but is more modest about Vice!).

Fate must have conspired mightily to spoil such an attendance record. His incisive handling of Council business was replaced by the fumbblings of a new Secretary, and not all the President's skill and persistence could prevent the meeting ambling through to six o'clock, the lateness of the hour being signalled by a row of empty seats behind the London phalanx and understandable concern on the provincial faces remaining as trains left London's several hideous stations without them.

The Council opened with routine as January ones always do. Mrs. Martin, Messrs. Broome and Mann were duly appointed to yet another year's hard work as Officers of the Council, and trio became quartet with the appointment of Mr. Surridge as Honorary Assistant Secretary.

Miss Willson this year declined her annual honour as Chairman of Council and Mr. Tomlinson took over this comfortable seat. The Standing Committees having been appointed, Council adjourned to allow them to meet.

Their reports were the first item after lunch and provided the first battle of the year, with Press and Publications representatives, culture agleam in their eyes, fighting in vain against Mammon-inspired opposition from Finance and General Purposes.

The Annual Report was approved after Leningrad had been awarded a capital L and Llanwit Fardre removed from the list of far-flung place names. Goaded by London's effervescent W. G. Smith the Council decided upon some expansion of that section of the report dealing with last year's lively A.G.M. and the consequent action, if that is the correct word.

The report of a special Committee set up to consider the administration and organisation of correspondence courses caused less debate than might have been expected in view of its revolutionary proposals. The repercussions of some of these will appear shortly in several areas of the professional press.

The arrangement of the Presidential Induction was not expected to present difficulties, but with GLD playing "hard to get," it was by no means a routine item. Council decided to revert to the practice, dropped last year, of combining this function with the A.G.M. London will act as hosts on May 4th.

The progress of the Week-end Conference arrangements was reported and received general approval. An attempt is being made to secure a *big name* to open the proceedings this year. At Southport we are to be represented at the A.A.L. Session by our Honorary Editor, Mr. A. C. Jones, who has only to do as well from the platform as he regularly does in print to ensure one of the most successful meetings of the Conference.

Before Council met the Officers had considered Divisions' suggestions for celebrating our Diamond Jubilee. The most popular idea was that of a scholarship to a Library School, with Yorkshire doing things in a big way and suggesting two. But no real solution could be found of allocating such a considerable slice of Association funds to one individual.

Council decided that every effort should be made to arrange a broadcast by the President during the year, and a special issue of the *Assistant* was sanctioned to provide a permanent memory of the occasion. A later meeting of the committee set up to clarify the Association's function and policy (for the benefit of Mr. Hutchings) ensured that this issue would be a heart-searching one.

The business from Divisions suffered greatly from its low position on the agenda, with three of the four motions deferred to next time, and the other withdrawn by GLD in order to give our representatives a free hand in negotiating for a more satisfactory *L.A. Record*.

One person at least was glad to see the remnants of the Council rise and depart into the London night.

E.M.

CRAMERS *for MUSIC*

MUSICAL LITERATURE
AND MUSIC BINDING

**139, New Bond Street
London, W.1**

★ Special Music Enquiry Bureau

A propos

"SELLING THE LIBRARY SERVICE"

— Posters (11" x 8") drawing attention, in sober language, to the availability of KEESING'S in Libraries

may be obtained *free of charge* from

KEESING'S - Keynsham - BRISTOL

Berkshire Bookbinding Co., Ltd.

(Directors J. E. Cook and P. E. Cook)

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS

NON - FICTION AND
REFERENCE BINDINGS
ARE OUR SPECIALITY

**27, ELDON TERRACE
READING, BERKS.**

Telephone: Reading 60688.

BIRKBECK COLLEGE
(University of London).

Session 1955-1956 begins
Monday, October 3rd, 1955.

Part-time (Evening) Courses provided for Internal Degrees in the Faculties of Arts and Science and for the Academic Post-Graduate Diploma in Psychology. Facilities are provided for part-time and full-time students reading for Higher Degrees in Arts and Science.

Application for admission should be made before 1st June. *Pamphlet and form of application may be obtained from the Registrar, Birkbeck College, Malet Street, W.C.1.*

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES OFFICER AND PUBLICATIONS DISTRIBUTOR

The A.A.L. wish to appoint persons with previous experience in the library profession to conduct the organisation and administration of correspondence courses. Salary and duties will be decided according to number of hours offered by applicants.

The location of the work is dependent on choice of vacant offices, and any interested persons who can provide vacant office and storage accommodation of about 300 sq. ft. in their immediate area will be given preference.

Further details may be obtained from the Honorary Secretary, E. E. Moon, F.L.A., Central Library, Duke's Avenue, Chiswick, W.4.

A.A.L. PUBLICATIONS

A check-list of current and forthcoming publications was published as page xvii of the Examination Supplement in the February issue.

Please note that the price of *The A.A.L. Guide* to the Final Examination, Parts 2 and 2b, should be given as 4s. 6d. (3s. 6d. to members).

Publications are obtainable from The A.A.L. Hon. Publication Officer, Central Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE JUNIOR ASSISTANT

Miss Wilden-Hart has ably outlined [February issue] a useful programme of staff training, but I feel she has not brought out the dangers of her separation of juniors into "counter-hands" and "sub-professionals".

It may be that assistants who perform the so-called "non-professional" duties admirably may not all make suitable "professionals", but a social distinction in status at junior level would certainly be more disruptive of cordial relationships between library staff than the present simple senior-junior distinction. Further, many girls of good type who perhaps never pass more than two parts of "registration" before marriage would be turned away from library work altogether, not wishing to become "non-professionals", nor to undertake a long course of study necessary as "sub-professionals". Yet at present they give much better service to the public than could probably be

expected from the type who would be attracted to serve as "counter hands". In Germany, where closed access is almost universal, the distinction can be more readily made, especially since ledger catalogues are frequent, and the counter assistant is truly only a "fetch and carry" clerk. In British libraries, however, a greater degree of interest and efficiency in book-knowledge is expected even from the junior assistant.

Juniors should be encouraged to view the work of their library system as an entity, and valuable experience can be gained from the simplest processes. Some require more skill than is often realized, such as the accurate filing of catalogue cards; whilst handling of books over the counter, or straightening of shelves, will greatly enhance the junior's knowledge of the range and variety of published information. How may a junior's duties be made attractive to entrants of good personality and education? First, by refraining from any discrimination in

social status; secondly, by adopting Miss Wilden-Hart's principles of training; thirdly, by emphasizing practical library work in the entrance examination, and awarding a substantial increment upon success.

For aspirants to truly professional status, library school courses should be made possible by means of adequate grants to adult students (i.e. at age 22 or over); graduates should be encouraged; and facilities for interchange of duties in various types of library at home and abroad should exist, especially desirable being the establishment of a superannuation scheme acceptable to all types of library. As Miss Wilden-Hart has said, these problems do require further investigation "by a professional body."

A. D. JONES,
Branch Librarian,
Wealdstone, Middlesex C.L.

BIRMINGHAM CONFERENCE

So many ex-students of the Loughborough School of Librarianship met together at the A.A.L. Nottingham Conference last year that we felt that this Conference would provide an excellent annual occasion for such a reunion. Since this year's Conference at Birmingham is again in a conveniently central position, I hope that as many old-Loughburians as possible will attend.

ROY STOKES,
Head of Library School,
Loughborough.

MEETINGS

Miss Binder [in the January issue] skates gracefully round my argument, and accuses me of saying that I preferred juniors to gather rosebuds. As I did not say it, but merely that perhaps they preferred to, much of her letter is not particularly relevant.

For the sake of argument, however, I will accept all hers. I will even admit that week-end conferences are an important stimulant to professional enthusiasm, although I know—she must know—plenty of keen, qualified and competent librarians

who never attend a conference of any sort, or even a Chaucer House meeting.*

But I still ask why a staff guild should subsidize a teenager with no responsibilities, rather than a married man trying to keep a wife and children and to pay off a mortgage.

The great cause of social and economic equality, for which many men and women have lived and died, deserves better than to be dissipated in attempts to rob experience, length of service, and training of any rewards.

EDWIN CHAPMAN,
Assistant, Battersea P.L.

[*The Association's "party line" is that a lot of them would perhaps be more competent librarians still if they did; they would also be helping in a small way to increase the competence of their colleagues who do go to meetings in the hope of benefiting from the discussions and the informal contacts. A reminder of an important forthcoming opportunity appears on page 41.—Hon. Ed.]

The failure of most staff guilds and the apathy of many junior assistants, it seems to me, is due not so much to the juniors themselves, nor perhaps even to their seniors. The fault is in those at the top. The meetings they are "encouraged" to attend are often unbelievably dull and uninteresting, and rarely, if ever, is anything new said. Who can enthuse over issue methods, filing cabinets and the minor details of classification and cataloguing? Of course, all these things are vitally necessary, but, as has so often been pointed out, they are the means, not the end.

The librarian cannot hope to gain the respect, to say nothing of the salary, he desires unless he can show he is a man, or woman, of catholic taste and wide learning, something more in fact than just a date-stamp wielder. The Library Association is large enough and rich enough to be able to employ good lecturers and speakers on literary, historical, philosophical and other subjects. But perhaps it is not yet adult enough.

THE THURLOE SERIES

*of special library
editions——ideal*

*for travelling
libraries*

Arts and Crafts
Cycling Tourist Guides
Electrical
Engineering
Gardening
Pets and Livestock
Modelling, etc.
Modelling, Railways
Photography
Wireless and
Television
Juveniles and
Elementary Readers

*Catalogues and Sample on
request*

OPPENHEIM & Co. Ltd.

*Library and Wholesale
Booksellers*

25, THURLOE STREET,
SOUTH KENSINGTON,
LONDON, S.W.7.

Telephone :
Kensington 6807 & 9431

It is time the people responsible for organising these meetings were shaken out of their unthinking slumber and realised that a table can appear perfectly sound even though the interior is completely eaten away by ants. Scratch a librarian and as often as not you will find . . . nothing.

G. J. BONTOLT,
Assistant, Hendon P.L.

CATALOGUING RULES

Miss Morton's letter in the January number, particularly her reference to "the many pettifoggish rules in the A-A. Code", irritated me a great deal as a teacher and writer on the subject. It was therefore with great interest that I read Mr. Reed's reply. He has, of course, hit the nail right on the head when he puts the question "Is the solution as simple as [Miss Morton] naively supposes?" Of course it is not, by any means.

So far I was pleased with Mr. Reed's reply, but I must protest against his charge of apathy on the part of the Library Association, and against other misleading statements. If he refers to *ALA Cataloguing Rules*, 1949, he will find printed behind the title page the names of the members of the British committee who worked with their American colleagues on the Advisory Committee up to the beginning of the last war, and at the end of the preface this recognition of their services :

"The British committee, whose cordial co-operation was interrupted in 1939 by the outbreak of war, has been kept informed of progress and general agreement is assured. The work on the preliminary edition profited throughout from suggestions that came through the Honorary Secretary, H. S. Acomb, librarian of Durham University, reporting on sections of the tentative rules as they passed through the hands of the British committee."

Mr. Reed will not need to be reminded that from late 1939 until well after the war, many of us, young and old alike, were engaged on tasks that gave us little time to think about

cataloguing codes. Since May, 1951, however, the Cataloguing Rules Sub-Committee has sat regularly once a month, and includes among its members some of the foremost cataloguing experts in the country. During these four years, substantial progress has been made; we have finished a close examination of the Rules for personal authorship and are now working on the thorny problems attaching to Corporate authorship, all of it in close co-operation with our American colleagues. To write of "any pretence of Anglo-American co-operation on cataloguing rules" being "shattered," is therefore simply not true.

Many memoranda on specific rules or groups of rules have been prepared in turn by most of the individual members of the Sub-Committee in order to clear the way for a provisional decision. I think it would be conceded that it would be inadvisable to publish such provisional decisions until our American colleagues have had an opportunity of studying closely our final draft, to the completion of which in the near future every member of the Sub-Committee is devoting much time and careful work.

The reference to Cutter opens up another question altogether, though that, too, has not escaped the Sub-Committee's notice. Whether in fact anybody can produce anything better than Cutter for the making of a dictionary catalogue is a very moot question; personally I doubt it.

On cataloguing generally it must be remembered that many factors are now at work which may greatly influence cataloguing methods and the making of catalogues, ranging from possible modifications in British Museum practice, the place of the BNB in our cataloguing, the development of mechanical methods of reproduction of entries, the increasing amount of ephemeral literature, and so on.

Meanwhile, it is rewarding to know that there is still a great interest in this subject, as reflected, for instance, in the recently published *Cataloguing*

A. M. HALDANE

LTD.



WE SPECIALISE IN
CHILDREN'S BOOKS
listed and annotated in our
monthly *Juvenile Guide*



B.N.B. ORDERS



SPECIAL REQUESTS



PROMPT SERVICE
especially in the London
Area



5, DENMARK STREET,
CHARING CROSS ROAD,
W.C.2

TEMple Bar 3650

principles and practice: an inquiry, which I hope every student and practising cataloguer will take an early opportunity of studying.

HENRY A. SHARP,
*Hon. Secretary, L.A. Cataloguing
Rules Sub-Committee.*

With regard to the correspondence concerning the cataloguing rules, I would first like to express my appreciation for Mr. Reed's commiseration and indignation; the sympathy and understanding of tutors makes the student's burden much lighter. He did not, alas, explain why Miss Morton's suggestion was impracticable. A mere student, lacking practical experience, could write a book on the inadequacies and illogicality of the rules, and the lethargy of the body concerned with their revision. Miss Morton, however, offered a concrete suggestion, whether naïve or otherwise. I can only hope Mr. Reed will excuse the naïveté of students who have not yet learnt the bitter facts of life.

The indifferent attitude towards this subject displayed by English librarians is understandable. Once the hurdle of the examination has been surmounted the happy A.L.A. can quickly forget all those rules which he has striven to master parrot-fashion and apply a sensible, modified form in actual practice.

I am wholeheartedly in agreement with Miss Morton's suggestion that an independent body of younger practising librarians should be set up to formulate a new set of rules in a specified time.

DIANE A. WINTER,
Assistant, Staffs Co.L.

CLASSIFICATION

I am sorry to have to comment on Mr. Taylor's unhappy attempt to defend his review of *An Introduction to Library Classification* [January issue].

The answer to his preliminary piece of innuendo is of course that classification was the student's particular bugbear long before 1950. He should look round for an older scapegoat

than BNB.

Students of the recent history of classification can save themselves the effort of trying to track down "a completely individual scheme, based on the same schedules." Such a scheme exists only in Mr. Taylor's imagination. Can it be that this is merely hyperbole, and that he really means to say that BNB uses 3 non-Dewey auxiliary signs? If not, will he say what he means?

It is inaccurate to say that UDC is the accepted scheme for the arrangement of subject bibliographies. UDC is the accepted scheme for the subject bibliography of documentation material (papers, reports, excerpts, periodical articles, etc.). Its sponsoring body dropped the term "Bibliographie" from its corporate name and substituted "Documentation" many years ago. It has no special claim for use in a non-analytical subject bibliography of books and monographs, apart from its possible utility as a vehicle for international bibliographical co-operation.

Fuller use of the Ranganathan approach to practical classification would unburden the student of many worries. The truth is that there are quite extensive issues in practical classification which pre-Ranganathan classification theory does not touch. Classifiers are required to launch themselves across this gap between theory and practice on the precarious and unreliable wings of intuition—a faculty be it noted, that cannot be taught. Towards this gap there are two possible attitudes to be adopted. One can deny its existence and attempt to conceal it by a froth of mystique and question-begging platitude, or one can recognise it and accept the considerable assistance in crossing it that the Ranganathan approach affords. Mr. Taylor does no service to students in trying to scare them off the most coherent and constructive approach to practical classification yet offered to librarians.

E. J. COATES,
*Chief Subject Cataloguer,
British National Bibliography.*

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 48. No. 4

APRIL, 1955

1895—1955

WHAT NOW ?

IT IS APPROPRIATE that a forward-looking body like the A.A.L. should make its Diamond Jubilee an occasion for self-questioning, for a reconsideration of aims and policy. We have accordingly invited a number of friends and critics to discuss these questions in this Jubilee issue, and we hope that as many members as possible will take part in the subsequent discussion, so that we may emerge from 1955 with a sure knowledge of our present deficiencies and a clear sense of future purpose.

But even the A.A.L. may be excused a brief backward glance on such an occasion. Our Golden Jubilee issue (Sept.-Oct., 1945) contained a bold marshalling of 50 years' officers, and the memories of our first two Presidents (W. Benson Thorne and W. C. Berwick Sayers) and Gurner P. Jones, our longest serving Hon. Secretary. We have invited Mr. Sayers to contribute to this issue some further reflections upon our 60 years of life.

But the time is not yet ripe for a full scale history of the Association. Instead in a year in which we are conscious as never before of the need for a dynamic and constructive policy if our continued existence is to be justified, we have gathered from early issues of the *Library Assistant* some statements of our early aims and ideals which may have fresh meaning for us to-day.

Some Jubilee Memories and Reflections, by W. C. Berwick Sayers 50

YESTERDAY

The First Annual Report of the Library Assistants' Association (1896)	54
How Best to Increase the Usefulness of the L.A.A., by B. L. Dyer (1900)	56
The Library Assistants' Association: a Statement of Its Use and Objects, by Geo. E. Roebuck (1906)	57
Reports of Two Early Meetings (1898 and 1903)	60

TODAY

59th ANNUAL REPORT	62
Officers of the A.A.L., 1955	65
Annual Financial Statement	66
60th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	68

TOMORROW

The Future of the A.A.L.: a symposium with contributions by F. G. B. Hutchings, W. Tynemouth, R. J. Hoy, Miss E. J. Willson, R. Stokes and P. D. Pocklington	69
--	----

SOME JUBILEE MEMORIES AND REFLECTIONS

by W. C. BERWICK SAYERS, *Hon. F.A.A.L.*

I.

SO WE HAVE reached our Diamond Jubilee. We must have vitality to have survived so long; useless organizations go the way of the unnecessary much sooner. We show no signs of that yet. But it is, as our Editor seems to think, worth while to take a glance at the past, the present and the future, to see what has been and is the justification of our being.

It was in May, 1904, a week or so after my arrival in Croydon, that I attended a meeting of the Library Assistants' Association—forgive the use for once of the old name—when James Duff Brown read a paper at St. Bride's Institute where the Association usually met; and at this very first meeting the Chairman, Evan G. Rees of Westminster, invited me to follow Jast in the discussion—which I did with much trepidation and no doubt small result, being as innocent then of knowledge of the subject; annotation, as most of the assembly were. Note that these were all "chief" librarians, although others took part; and chief meant something then. It distinguished a race apart, masters of their libraries, and only now coming slowly to know that assistants had souls of their own. Within a month I went to tea with the Hon. Secretary, Geo. Ed. Roebuck, as he signed himself, one of the creative librarians of my own generation who is too little remembered now. At that meeting I was somehow co-opted to the Committee and became Hon. Secretary of the Education Committee, charged with the arrangement of the meetings and a number of other duties.

Nine years had passed since the founding of the Association with about two-score members, and R. A. Peddie as the first Chairman. Already some of its earlier stalwarts had gone from active participation: the ingenious Bertram L. Dyer to Kimberley; F. Meaden Roberts to Whitechapel; A. W. Wood, eloquence itself, to the seclusion of Westminster from which, to my own regret, he too infrequently emerged; and not a few others of whom I am unable to write as they were not in action when I was in the Association. Our Committee was manned by such men as Rees, Roebuck, Benson Thorne, Hugh Smith of Bishopsgate, J. D. Young of Greenwich, John Rivers of Hampstead—then our most cultured Editor, and author of at least one folio on a French artist—and we had a too severe, indeed somewhat dour Hon. Treasurer in W. George Chambers of Woolwich. Earlier Committee meetings, I am told, were held in pubs, but not in my time. A Chaucer House was not even in our dreams then; we met at St. Bride Library, a few times at the Bishopsgate or the Cripplegate Institute, and other places which were quite hospitable to us.

II.

Our aims and objects were, in the first place, to produce a situation that would provide an assistant with friends in every library; secondly, to establish a platform, because we had many grievances as well as some aspirations to air; above all, to increase our deserving by the acquirement of qualifications that intelligent people would recognise—we did not even despair of committees and councillors.

The early history of the L.A.A. was a progressive demonstration of our desire to break down the isolation of the library assistant, to train

him so that he could no longer in justice be spoken of by his chief as something a little less than his wife's general skivvy. We recognised that to talk of a "profession" when we were uncertificated and uncultured was not impressive. I had been advised when I was at Bournemouth that the L.A. exams. were "too stiff; no one should expect them of a librarian." At Croydon I learned that L.A. exams. really were taken, and by quite ordinary assistants, and concluded that if I meant to remain in this service I should take them, too. I did, and was the first diplomate of the Association and the only one that has taken an honours diploma by getting honours in four subjects, this in two years. That is not merely a boast; it is an indication of my own attitude, in which I was supported by Jast, and helped immeasurably by working with and learning from James D. Stewart, who had an uncanny grasp of technique and an enviable gift for imparting it. The Association was a derivation of the early L.A. Summer Schools; it was represented on the L.A. Education Sub-Committee, at any rate in the early stages; it had its own correspondence study circles; an "evercirculator" system (in which a file was started on a subject and passed round from one member to another, each adding his own contribution; when the circuit was complete it reversed its course so that every contributor benefited by the work of the rest); we established "proficiency tests" in which anyone might participate—and some did—when questions were set and answered at home, and J. D. Brown and other important chiefs acted as our assessors. Many of our meetings were addressed by chiefs, although some of *us* were vocal enough.

From 1896 we had been exercised about formal classes. Three years later our gifted Hon. Secretary and Editor of the *Library Assistant* wrote (*L.A.*, v. 1, 1899): "How the question of an adequate education for library assistants will be solved I do not pretend to say . . . If pupil teacher training centres are possible library centres are possible. But to have these it is necessary that assistants attend them during official hours, and that library committees support such centres—even Education Boards. To-day it may seem quixotic and utterly beyond the region of probability to say such centres will ever come into existence. But . . . the world does not seem to move, but 'e pur si muove,' as Galileo said."

Well may the *Library Assistant* have borne on its cover

The little—done;

The undone—vast!

But, we had, by 1906, winter courses in librarianship at the London School of Economics: Historical Bibliography by A. W. Pollard, Library Administration by J. D. Brown, Cataloguing by J. Henry Quinn, and Classification by L. S. Jast—I attended them all. But it took twenty years from the time when Dyer wrote for the full-time library school to come, and another twenty before the first, at University College, found any companion. Some classes had been held, and gave rise to the campaign of the L.A.A. to exclude students who were not already in libraries, but it failed, and was only the echo of a memory in my time.

These memories are a confusion of bits and pieces from the past, but they should convey the idea that we were struggling, against a difficult, penurious background for longer vision, better equipment and some sort of status. A good deal had been achieved, and by the time I became Hon. Secretary the beginnings of our techniques were there and our ambition in public libraries to be freed from the penny rate limit was growing. Nevertheless my own efforts were directed to enlarging the Association, linking up with the L.A. and making ourselves a little more impressive.

The L.A.A. would have no affiliation with the L.A. I led for it and was defeated by about 20 votes. I suggested that someone should have the courage to make an onslaught on our title. "Society of Assistant Librarians' would be an infinitely better name," but that cut no ice at that time. Even now, however, I think S.A.L. more pronounceable than A.A.L., and less likely to be muddled with A.L.A. It took a long time for the idea to settle anyway. We needed branches. I had a salary by now rising to £200, which in 1907 was considered good—anyway it was worth £1,000 now, according to Dr. Savage's calculations of money value a little earlier. We had a North-Western Branch, but it petered out, or seemed to, before my time. What was wanted was one based on every large centre. So I stumped the country at my own expense, but with my Committee's approval—to Leeds, to Liverpool, Birmingham, Newcastle, Cardiff, Brighton; and small but active branches capable of growth emerged, owing to the enthusiasm of a leading assistant here and there. We revised the constitution to line on with that of the L.A.; we created Honorary Fellows and Fellows—librarians who wanted to stay with us after their "elevation"; the Committee became the Council, and the Chairman, President. (Thorne was the first). One of our most effective efforts was the enquiry into Hours and Conditions of Service and the resulting report which later reports have supplemented. It was essential to our aspirations. Then in some libraries we worked from 9 a.m. until 10 p.m. on four days, had a "half-day" at 2 p.m., and an early evening at 6 p.m. On five days our break for dinner (lunch now!) was 1½ hours, and for tea on four we had 1½. As for salaries, they were ludicrous except to their threadbare recipients; and only a very few libraries had any staff amenities at all.

When I became Hon. Secretary there were 190 members; when I most reluctantly left for Wallasey there were nearly 900. I suppose I wanted to be chief librarian and I was fortunate in being able to take with me the Hon. Librarian (and we have lived happily ever after). Otherwise—well, Wallasey was a delightful place and everyone there was good to me during my brief sojourn.

III.

Prophecy is a gratuitous form of stupidity, as George Eliot wisely remarked, and my indulgence in it will be brief. We are not concerned now much with the past, with so vast and uncertain a future to occupy the whole capacities of our members. There were few men in my days who were over thirty-five in our ranks; the library world was younger. I was President at 26, and not younger than most of my companions. In that alone the A.A.L. differs, although it has all the younger ones as well in it. It consists predominantly of women, and the entry which my astonished eyes read in the first (or second) Committee Minute Book: "*Resolved*: that no woman shall be admitted in membership of the Association" was never effective and now is a joke. Their voting power, if exercised, could unseat every male; but as in parliamentary voting, women don't do such things. It is now a great society, exclusively professional and of much influence, but still its basic objects and activities are those of the little L.A.A. of sixty years ago, with enormous extensions; it is, in effect, that part of the Library Association which unites all its members who are not the finally responsible officers of their libraries. Therein has lain a current difficulty, inherent in all bodies who rule by the popular vote; we have often concerned ourselves in library politics. Fortunately there has usually existed the sense of responsibility. The Association owes a great deal to the initiative of fine men: at the

centre, Gurner Jones, James Revie, and later—to mention only two out of dozens—E. A. Clough and W. Tynemouth; and, primarily in the Branches but working towards and reaching the centre, from Leeds G. W. Strother and Norman Treliving, with James Ross of York, Checketts and Cashmore of Birmingham, Harry Farr at Cardiff, Wickens at Liverpool, Miss Gerard, Cecil Piper and Webb in Sussex, and Walton, Turnbull and W. Wilson in the North East. All these led the way for and with so many others. The organization now into Divisions (formally Branches), its innumerable meetings, its efficient management of correspondence tuition through continuous self-criticism, systematic courses and the exhaustive and invaluable post-mortem studies of examination questions (the most searching to which any profession known to me is subjected), the enterprise and bite of the official journal; what achievements these are, and how much unselfish work they represent, unpaid save by the gratitude which must be felt by those for whom it is done!

What of the future? The affiliation with the Library Association and the representation of the A.A.L. on its Committees and in its educational work as lecturers and teachers, members of the Board of Examiners, even Assessors—these things show the important position it holds. The future is full of problems as yet unsolved. Will the equalization of library posts and salaries impede the circulation of librarians? And, if so, what is the remedy? Will the specialization of every kind of librarian interfere with our unity? Will the profession become completely feminine as modern examinations at lower levels seem to promise—or threaten—and the future library be that of *Molly Hilton*? At how soon a date will every librarian be library-school trained? And will the hydrogen bomb solve these and a thousand other problems by removing libraries and the need for them?

Meanwhile the A.A.L. must pursue its ever-opening way, assured that its past has been good, and energized and sobered by the thought that at least ninety per cent of the chief librarians of the future are now in its ranks; that youth should dream, but also act, that librarians are only now beginning to take their real place in social life, and that the Association is a wonderful testing ground of ideas, a place of expression, a safety valve for our sillier utterances—for we all make them sometimes—and a fraternity and sorority of friends helpful to one another and determined to keep librarians and librarianship awake.

WHO'S WHO IN THE A.A.L.—2.
SAYERS, W. C. Berwick, formerly Chief Librarian, Croydon. Married to Olive E. Clarke, F.L.A., formerly of Islington P.L. and Hon. Librarian of the L.A.A. Three sons.

Appointments: Sub-librarian, Bournemouth, 1900-04; Sub-librarian, Croydon ("allowed to call himself Deputy after a year"), 1904-15; Chief Librarian, Wallasey, May-Sept., 1915; Chief Librarian, Croydon, 1915-47.

Work for A.A.L.: Hon. Secretary, Education Committee, 1904; Hon.

Secretary, 1905-8; Hon. Editor, 1908; President, 1909-12. Was elected to L.A. Council in 1912, and on accepting a chief-librarianship in 1915, was elected a Fellow of the A.A.L.

Work for L.A.: Nationally elected Councillor, 1912-1938 (with a break of one year); successively sub-editor of *L.A. Record*; Hon. Secretary, Education Committee; Chairman, Executive Committee; sometime examiner in Classification and Library Administration; Assessor for six years; President, 1938; subsequently Hon. Fellow.

THE FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE LIBRARY ASSISTANTS' ASSOCIATION

signed on behalf of the Committee by R. A. Peddie, Chairman, and F. Meaden Roberts, Hon. Secretary, and presented to the Annual Meeting held at 20, Hanover Square, W., on July 1st, 1896.

In presenting the first report of the Library Assistants' Association, the Committee are extremely gratified to be able to record the unvarying success which has attended the Association in the first year of its existence, and to acknowledge the support it has received from librarians and others interested in the profession.

A short account of the movement to establish the Association will, perhaps, be of interest here. During the progress of the Summer School of 1895 the need of such an Association was freely expressed among the students and the advisability of forming one discussed. It was decided to convene a meeting of library assistants to further consider the proposal. A meeting was accordingly held on July 3rd at the Library Bureau, when assistants from most of the public libraries in London were present, Mr. R. A. Peddie, of the Gladstone Library, National Liberal Club, being voted to the chair.

Mr. W. W. Fortune, Lewisham Public Library, who acted as hon. secretary, *pro. tem.*, in moving "That an Association of Library Assistants be formed," gave a brief description of the scope and objects of the proposed Association. Mr. E. H. Caddie, Battersea Public Libraries, seconded the motion, which, on being put to the meeting, was carried unanimously. A Provisional Committee of seven was elected to draft rules for the consideration of the next meeting.

The first General Meeting of the Association was held at 20, Hanover Square, on July 17th, when the Provisional Committee, who had met at Battersea Public Library, on July 10th, submitted a set of rules. These, with a few amendments, were adopted by the meeting, and the first officers and committee elected.

The Committee at once set to work to draw up a programme for the ensuing session. They decided to hold the meetings fortnightly, and this arrangement has been carried out during the whole of the session. The inaugural meeting took the form of a *conversazione*, held at the Felix Institute, Lavender Hill, on August 21st, but owing to many librarians and assistants being away for their holidays, the attendance was not so large as it otherwise would have been. As it was, about 80 members and friends were present.

At the first ordinary meeting, held on September 4th, a discussion was opened by the Chairman on "The Aims and Objects of the Library Assistants' Association," when many practical suggestions were made for the guidance of the Committee. . . .

It is suggested that during next session meetings shall be held monthly, instead of fortnightly, and a different plan will be adopted. The programme is being arranged so that at each alternate meeting only, will a paper be read, and at the others discussions will be held on practical questions. Nothing definite has however been decided upon yet, and the matter will be left over for next year's committee.

A great want is felt among library assistants in there being no classes where they might qualify for the examinations of the Library Association. A scheme is under consideration whereby such a class might be formed.

No arrangements have been made, but the general idea is to hold a class at 9.30 p.m. on some day other than Wednesday, at which time, with a little exertion, the majority of assistants could attend if they wished. The subject for the first course would probably be English Literature. No fee would be charged for the lectures, which would be limited to members.

A collection of books bearing upon all phases of library history and administration and text books necessary for the education of a librarian, is being formed, but at present does not contain many volumes. The funds are too small to allow of any books being purchased, and all that the library contains are gifts, or have been acquired with money given for this special purpose. It is hoped in time to get together a thoroughly useful library, and donations either of money or books will be gratefully accepted. A special feature is being made of library catalogues, and the Committee earnestly request that librarians will present copies of their catalogues and special lists of books. The library is deposited at St. Martin's Public Library, and the hon. librarian, Mr. A. H. Carter, will gladly acknowledge all donations. Rules for the issue of books will be found appended.

The Association now numbers 54, ordinary members representing most of the London public libraries, and a few private and provincial libraries. In addition there are five honorary members. The Committee wish to point out that membership is not limited to assistants in London public libraries, but any assistant engaged in a library, public or private, in London or elsewhere, is eligible for election.

The heartiest thanks are given to Mr. MacAlister and the Library Association for the sympathy they have shown and the practical support they have given throughout the year. A room has always been available when necessary for meetings of the Association or Committee at 20, Hanover Square. On December 9th, Mr. Peddie read a paper on the Library Assistants' Association before the monthly meeting of the Library Association. The paper was well received, and in the discussion which followed all who spoke assured the former body of their cordial support.

It is with extreme regret that the Committee learn that Mr. Peddie will sever his connection with the Association at the termination of the present session, owing to his many other engagements. During the twelve months that Mr. Peddie has acted as Chairman he has won the respect of all the members by the able and pleasant way in which he has conducted both the Committee and general meetings. The Committee wish to place on record their high appreciation of the services which he has rendered this Association from its very commencement.

This report would be incomplete did it not mention the valuable aid given by Mr. W. W. Fortune, the first hon. secretary, during the preliminary stages of the Association. Owing to receiving an appointment in the Library Bureau, Mr. Fortune was compelled to resign his post after a very short period of office.

In conclusion, the Committee would impress upon all assistants the necessity of joining in large numbers if really useful work is to be accomplished. By attending the meetings assistants are brought into contact with one another; ideas and experiences are exchanged, and that good-fellowship established which cannot fail to be of influence for the good of the profession in general.

HOW BEST TO INCREASE THE USEFULNESS OF THE L.A.A.

by B. L. DYER (Hon. Secretary-Editor, 1898-1900).

Abridged from the *Library Assistant*, December, 1900.

To discuss how best to increase the usefulness of the L.A.A. one must bear in mind that the true usefulness of such an association can only be judged from the standpoint of the public interest, while one must clearly have in view its avowed objects:—"to promote the social, intellectual, and professional interests of its members."

The promotion of the interests of the L.A.A. is the promotion of the interests of the public—we seek to make library assistants more and more efficient servants of the public. The diffusion of knowledge as to the best methods of work, the comparison of ideas, and the exchange of experiences cannot help but to broaden the minds of all those engaged in similar work, breaking down the narrow-minded bigotry of systems, and the following of grooves, and thus widening general attainment. Even as a cataloguer may avail himself of all the work which has been done in the past by other cataloguers and thus save much individual labour, so by a comparison of methods and experience in all branches of library work time may be saved, to the public gain.

It seems almost impossible to suggest any new feature in connection with the present programme of the L.A.A. The value to the London assistants of a more or less regular attendance at the meetings held in the various library buildings so kindly placed at our disposal is perhaps not as well appreciated as it might be. The great difficulty and expense of travelling to these meetings from the towns adjacent to London, and to the Manchester meetings from the towns adjacent leads to the hope that in time to come will be developed a series of smaller branches, commenced possibly on the lines of a reading circle, such as led to the formation of the Birmingham and District branch of the L.A. Reading circles with a definite object of study are powerful education factors, and with the object of studying for the L.A. examination or some more generally recognised diploma, much useful work might be done. Large branches are of course most useful in developing *esprit de corps* or professional spirit, but a not inconsiderable use may be derived by a scheme on the lines of the University Correspondence Classes, the National Home Reading Union, or the Ruskin Hall Lectures, if some one would find time for this useful and pioneer work of organising the places "where two or three are gathered together."

The journal could easily be extended to double its present size if a larger proportion of the 3,000 library assistants in England joined the L.A.A., and any additional pages added should be devoted exclusively to educational matter. Courses of reading might be suggested, questions asked and model answers given by the co-operation of the lecturers, and summaries of the L.A. Education Committee lectures might well be printed for the benefit of those who cannot attend.

The question of new developments of the work suggests itself, but as in all other voluntary associations the difficulty at once arises of how much the unpaid officers of the association are to sacrifice their scant leisure for the benefit of their colleagues. For those who take no part in the actual work it is comparatively easy to point out flaws in administration, to suggest improvements and changes. But it must never be forgotten how much of the work is done under adverse circumstances, and that it is all voluntary, without fee or reward.

The older, wealthier, and parent Library Association is also a voluntary association, and it has the power by its charter to admit associate members. It does so—but compare for a moment what an associate member of the L.A. gets for his subscription with what a member of the L.A.A. gets!

The great want of the library world is a really live and active associate branch of the Library Association, and the work of the L.A.A. will never be concluded until such is established.

Other professional associations have their associate branches, which are generally powerful educative societies, designed to prepare junior practitioners to pass the professional examination, without having passed which, active membership of the parent association, or of the profession is ultimately impossible.

Librarianship as a profession is as yet too young to know its own ideals and limitations, but we must look forward to the day when it will do so, and prepare for that day. Those who went before us commenced the work, it is our duty to help it on.

THE LIBRARY ASSISTANTS' ASSOCIATION: A STATEMENT OF ITS USE AND OBJECTS

by GEO. E. ROEBUCK (Hon. Secretary, 1901-6).
Abridged from the *Library Assistant*, October, 1906.

There can be no doubt that the processes of growth and principles of progress of any institution which claims to be necessary should be as clearly understood as possible—half the difficulties that are met by organisations arise from a lack of understanding on these points by influential outsiders, and our Association has not been distinct from others in this respect. We are on the eve of a new session, a session which has every prospect of an advanced usefulness, and therefore we will endeavour to smooth the path for this term by clearing up some misunderstandings, and by throwing stronger light upon some matters of importance. We will attempt to reveal the L.A.A. as we see it, to explain what we consider it is, what we imagine it has done, and what we hope it may do. If we can make this clear our future course will be the easier.

We consider the L.A.A. to be a body organised for the social betterment and educational improvement of library workers other than chief librarians. We are united in our agreement that library assistantship in this country is capable of much advancement and we set ourselves to the task of working up to a better standard amongst ourselves. We desire to learn from one another rather than to teach. We take a modest opinion of our capabilities, and are constantly urging each other on, meanwhile exhibiting an unselfish desire to extend the beneficial influence we know to exist, to all workers in the same field as ourselves. Our difficulties are great from the fact that outside the large towns the men we would reach are isolated units, hard to get at and harder to quicken to that pitch when a man admits his weaknesses and girds himself for a climb to higher altitudes. We desire to work up a chain of connection and intercourse which shall extend to every library assistant in the United Kingdom, and even to the men in that Britain which lies overseas. Along that

chain we hope to send the constant stimulus to educational and practical improvement, which can only result in a school of librarianship such as Edwards and Bradshaw foresaw. This object of ours is one to which only the meanest souls can take exception, and one which has the double effect to every man who throws in his lot with us, inasmuch as whilst it helps him to help himself it is slowly, but most surely, building up a profession which through the present condition of things is not sufficiently accredited. To advance the professional status is to advance the scope and opportunities of every young man who is to be at the helm of affairs in the future, and that is an undeniable argument which should accord the L.A.A. full measure of justification. By slow degrees we have grown until to-day we represent approximately some 40 per cent. of the junior circle. We are unique in our standing, and since our membership is culled from all quarters of our Empire we may be pardoned if we consider ourselves to be in a position to voice the opinions and watch the interests of the circle of assistantship as a whole. It is to our efforts in this direction that unenrolled men are prone to take umbrage, yet if those men only realised the earnest regard for their interests which the L.A.A. evinces, whether members or not, the troublesome obstructions we meet would not be so readily forthcoming. We are an active body, and did we choose we could close our lists and work hard amongst ourselves to produce a school of men who, by their greater opportunities, would become preference men in a few years. In so doing we should menace the outer ring very seriously, but we prefer to extend to others the privileges we have won for ourselves.

Of our past record we need not say a great deal. We were instituted at the period when the movement for a better class of library workers began to take shape. Fifteen years ago assistantship was not as we find it to-day; generally speaking, the men were not to be compared with the class that is backing the library movement to-day. In many cases the work was not carried out with aim, it was an easy livelihood, and as such had its attractions. The men were but poorly paid, but perhaps they were paid as much as they were worth. They knew few if any of their craft; they seldom aspired to promotion outside their own library. They had no system of practical instruction, and few technical manuals were in existence, such as were being often unknown. We must not forget, however, that librarianship was at this date still in the making. Lucky was the assistant who was being coached for future service prior to 1892. The Library Association having ironed out those broad lines of policy and practice which are the feeding stuffs of the assistant of to-day, turned to the pressing need for a better type of assistant. An examination scheme was formulated, and though it cannot be recorded that this scheme was successful, it must be admitted that it served a good end, if only by reason of the information it yielded as to the condition of the men behind the counter. Besides this it brought the urgency of qualification home to the assistants; there was an awakening to the fact that librarianship meant a life spent in the acquisition of knowledge, and in that awakening the beginnings of real assistantship are to be noted. Almost at once the L.A.A. was founded. Its initiators were men in advanced posts in Metropolitan libraries, who realised the condition of things and determined to work up some means of co-operation amongst library workers for mutual assistance. Their efforts have brought forth good fruit; the L.A.A. has been largely instrumental in bringing about that increased efficiency amongst assistants which is so noticeable nowadays.

Parallel with the growth of the L.A.A. practical instruction emerged

from the ashes of former attempts, and our body played a part in the closing of the entry to untrained men. We protested against the "open door" in justice to those men whom we were urging to qualify. We knew that if the Library Association only gave us time we could send them more candidates than they bargained for, but until we saw that it was to be an examination of a technical character reserved for practical men we could scarcely be blamed for holding our hands. A temporary breach resulted, but, as the years have rolled by, relations have become closer until last year, when they reached high water mark in the invitation to affiliate with which the Library Association honoured us. This invitation was declined because the independence of the L.A.A. was considered essential to its progress and the work it had in view. So we find ourselves to-day: No less than 500 men have passed or are passing through our Association to competency, and this linking up of library workers is to show results before long—even now the working out can be traced.

On the eve of a new Session we wonder what is in store for us? Is this year to outstrip all forerunners, or is that dry rot apathy to creep in and frustrate our enterprise just as we near the pinnacle? It is no idle speculation. Whilst a body is forming, whilst it yet remains in the first stages, there is much hope and scope for personal initiative. All eyes are fixed on that future for which all heads and hands are so hard at work, but as we become more and more established there is a tendency for enthusiasm to flag. Lest this fault shall become too pronounced, let us make an appeal for close interest and continued energy before we speak of work ahead. There will always be a something to strive for, a something to keep our association up to concert pitch. Every generation of assistants will find as much awaiting them as we are faced with to-day; the greater improvement in the standard of assistantship will only mean a greater need for the L.A.A. We cannot afford to slacken speed; before us lies a great work of which as yet we know but the beginnings.

The campaign for extended membership must go on without ceasing, and upon the results of this campaign depends the amount of work we shall be able to perform. Our journal is a good lever in this respect, but to increase the usefulness of that production is impossible so long as we are unable to increase its bulk. This means more expenditure, which means new members. In receiving new members we are reaching a farther field, we are pulling down that approximated 60 per cent. that stands at present as a check to unanimity of object amongst younger British librarians, and we are becoming more in order to speak and act for the whole. If members in the provincial districts would only work up local sections they would be most heartily backed by the main body. These local sections are the future aim of the L.A.A., and until they are formed no true progress outside the larger towns is possible. The existence of present local organisations need be no obstacle—get them amalgamated, linked up in any way which has a trace of promise in it, and extend the benefits we enjoy. So long as a stray provincial assistant is stranded, so long can it be said that the L.A.A. is not doing its work.

The aim of all this enrolment now calls for examination. As has been stated our first care must be for certificated qualification. No society of a practical nature can afford for its members to ignore a standard of proficiency. In order to be of service to our class we have two duties to perform in this connection, viz., to watch the attitude of the Library Association Education Committee, frankly criticising its propaganda, and at the same time to assist ourselves and our fellows to obtain that certification which the Education Committee is instituted to

issue. There can be no two minds as to the result, which will be to clear the difficulties for both examiners and examinees. What is more, we are justified in interesting ourselves in those matters which stand between us and the fields of competency. A further aim rests with the last mentioned. We know as well as our chiefs the second rate position in which librarianship is recognised to-day, and we believe that to raise this can only be accomplished by raising the standard of the men at the wheel. Let there be no mistaken ideas—we are not yet of a stuff that 20th century librarianship demands. It would, however, be foolish to imagine that assistants are yet prepared to back our Association for no more material results; the accomplishment of these objects shows little to the eye, and does not go far to stimulate active interest. The inter-communication must be continuous. More measures need introducing to keep apathy under whilst our elected leaders are moving slowly along the track. Apathy is the great enemy—it arises mainly from a feeling that the general membership has no finger in the administrative pie. There must be more work for these fingers. The greater the membership, the wider the membership, the more need for help, therefore, members who may feel this canker at work in themselves have a remedy waiting at hand. The Executive can make work and can undertake many an enterprise, but no Executive in this world can bring back interest once a member chooses to let it go by the board.

Our Association has now reached a level of recognition at home and abroad; it has a clearer course than ever, and its doings can be looked forward to with interest. It has come to stay, and has much to do. Its success depends not only on a carefully selected Executive, but also on the efforts of every individual member. Measures are occupying the attention of the several Committees which will mean much to the dignity of the calling, the pleasure of the membership, and the progress of the L.A.A. Our social arrangements in the past years have been very happy ones, and we are more encouraged to go ahead in this direction. Our intercourse is extending month by month—overseas as well as in the United Kingdom—and the day seems nearer when we shall have a representative union in each of the colonies of the realm. We have everything to gain by a long prosperity; we and all our class have everything to lose without the L.A.A. Let us work hard, therefore, but above all let us work earnestly.

REPORTS OF TWO EARLY MEETINGS

SUMMER PROGRAMME, 1898.

The first item on the Summer Programme, the visit to Hatfield House on June 28th, was favoured with one of the brightest of summer afternoons, and a party of twenty-eight members and friends, including ladies, travelled down from King's Cross, to be met at the gate of Lord Salisbury's mansion by a further five, who formed the cycle contingent of the Association. After an inspection of the artistic and historic treasures of the house, and a pleasant walk in the park, tea was partaken of at the Hatfield Temperance Hotel, presided over by Mrs. B. L. Dyer, Miss Roberts, and Miss Arnott. Photo-

graphs of the party were then taken in Hatfield Park by Mr. Ward, and after a further stroll in the grounds and gardens, the return to town was made, thus concluding a most enjoyable afternoon.

INAUGURAL MEETING [1903] AT STEPNEY

In spite of the late appearance of the Journal and consequent short notice given, an exceptional number of members and friends gathered to take part in the excellent programme arranged by Mr. Cawthorne on the 7th ultimo. Soon after three o'clock the party were being conducted round certain special portions of His Majesty's Tower by a jovial and portly warder, who apparently had English History, at any rate so far as the Tower was concerned, at his finger-tips. The ordinary sights, such as the Regalia, were not inspected, but the generally reserved portions, *i.e.*, the Dungeon, the Armoury and the St. Peter's Church, were viewed with much interest. From the Tower, the party wended its way, *via* the Mincries, to the Whitechapel Art Gallery, where an instructive exhibition of ships and shipping was seen under the guidance of the Director.

The museum was next visited and its aims and working explained by the Curator, Miss Hall. Probably this is one of the most practical and useful museums in existence. From here the party proceeded to Toynbee Hall, and was received in the Drawing Room by Canon Barnett, the Warden. The Canon gave a few warm words of welcome, in the course of which he said this place, Toynbee Hall, has been existing now for the last twenty years; it was a sort of college, club, and centre of education. Every man who lived in the house took part in some one or other of the sections of work connected with the Hall. It is the object of all who teach to come into personal contact, as far as possible, with the learner, and it is thought that better results are gained thereby. Librarians are educationalists, and under the new Act they would realise this more and more. He envied the youth of those present for the opportunities they would have as educationalists. All that had been done was not what might have been done, and what remained to be done in the future must be largely accomplished by the librarian. He believed in personally conducted tours in Bookland by librarians. He urged the fostering of humanities which must make men realise that each individual was one of a great association, and not a separate unit to live for himself alone. In conclusion, he bid the Library Assistants' Association heartily welcome.

Tea was next served in the Lecture Hall, to which fifty members and friends sat down. After tea, Mr. Cawthorne, seconded by Mr. Rees, voiced the thanks of the Association to the Canon for his welcome and hospitality. This was acknowledged by the Under-Warden, Mr. Beveridge.

Under the guidance of Mr. Councillor Douglas, one of the residents, the Dining Room, Library, Lawn Tennis Grounds, Men's Apartments and Invalid School were visited and items of interest connected with each were dwelt upon. Finally, Mr. Douglas gave a short sketch of the history of the settlement.

Shortly afterwards, the party bid adieu to Toynbee Hall, carrying away many pleasant recollections, and proceeded to the St. George's Library, Cable Street. Here several other members joined, and it was a full room that Mr. F. C. Mills, Chairman of the Stepney Libraries Committee, presided over. The Chairman addressed a few warm words of welcome, and briefly commented on the success of the Stepney Libraries, which he said was due in no small degree to their excellent librarian and his staff. Mr. Cawthorne then gave an address on "Recent Adverse Criticism of Municipal Libraries," which, together with the discussion, appears elsewhere in this number.

A vote of thanks to Mr. Cawthorne was moved by Mr. Vellenoweth, seconded by Mr. Thorne, and a similar vote, proposed by Mr. Rees, seconded by Mr. Hatcher, was accorded to the Chairman. This terminated one of the most successful, enjoyable and instructive inaugural meetings ever arranged.

ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS
(Section of the Library Association)

59th ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1954

AFTER THE eventful post-war years and a financial crisis, the Council of the Association was concerned in 1954, in the main, with planning for the future. This planning covered not only a routine consideration of the general rules and of rules of procedure, but culminated in a decision to appoint a special committee to clarify the basic and distinctive policy of the Association, and to consider methods for the adequate publicising of that policy and for its effective implementation: not a decision lightly to be reached by a body allegedly trembling on the brink of absorption, dissolution, or some synonym of *ham kiri*.

Nevertheless, one current problem remains constantly before the Council—that of posts advertised at inadequate salaries. The greatest satisfaction that the Council can feel is that the number of applicants for the last post so advertised was very, very small, and, it is to be hoped, one step nearer the complete support which members of the Association must give if any improvement is to be assured.

An innovation was the holding of a Presidential Induction in the President's home Division in place of the Inaugural Lecture previously held in London. The success of this experiment at Liverpool suggests that it may well become a permanent feature of the Association's year.

The fifth Annual Conference was held at Nottingham and the Council is grateful to the leaders—Messrs. D. I. Colley, F.L.A., S. C. Holliday, F.L.A., and W. S. Hudson, F.L.A. Under the title (not unknown to the Association) of *The reader and the bookish manner*, those present discussed the service to readers in libraries of all kinds. The Council is grateful to those local authorities and librarians who, together with the Conference secretary, Miss L. E. Green, A.L.A., of Nottinghamshire County Library, made essential contributions to the Conference's success.

The Annual General Meeting, which has been reported in the *Assistant Librarian*, was held in Chaucer House on May 20th, and must have been one of the liveliest meetings held in that building. The preliminary notice announced that after the business meeting, Mr. O'Leary, "one of the most stimulating, witty and forthright speakers in the profession," had been invited to speak and expected "his talk to provide a fitting climax to a memorable day." We were not disappointed.

The Annual General Meeting decided to increase Divisional representation for "Divisions" (at the moment this means the G.L.D.) with a membership exceeding 750; agreed to consider what impetus could be given to original research; instructed the Council to consider a revision of the rules governing the issue of correspondence courses; but refused to suggest continuing the distribution of the *Assistant Librarian* to defaulting members. During the remainder of the year the Council began work on those items requiring a report to the next Annual General Meeting.

There were five Council meetings during the year. The following attendances were recorded:—

J. S. Parsonage, F.L.A. (President) 5; J. S. Bristow, F.L.A. (Vice-President) 5; C. W. Taylor, F.L.A. (Past President) 5; A. L. Carver, F.L.A. 5; Miss B. C. Clark, F.L.A. 5; W. Howard Phillips, F.L.A. 5; H. Smith, F.L.A. 5; O. S. Tomlinson, F.L.A. 5; Miss E. J. Willson, F.L.A. 5 (National Councillors); Miss G. E. C. Edwards, A.L.A. (Bristol)

4; G. E. Thompson, F.L.A. (Bristol) 1; W. A. Smith, F.L.A. (Devon and Cornwall) 5; F. Bale, F.L.A. (Eastern) 2; J. W. Hunt (Eastern) 1; Miss E. M. Jahn, F.L.A. (East Midland) 3; P. J. Cox, F.L.A. (East Midland) 1; J. N. Taylor, A.L.A. (East Midland) 1; D. L. Brown, F.L.A. (East Midland) 1; E. E. Moon, F.L.A. (G.L.D.) 5; W. G. Smith, A.L.A. (G.L.D.) 5; R. G. Surridge, F.L.A. (G.L.D.) 4; H. R. Klieneberger, M.A., A.L.A. (G.L.D.) 1; R. Brown, F.L.A. (Kent) 4; A. H. Watkins, F.L.A. (Kent) 1; S. J. Brett, A.L.A. (Liverpool) 5; Miss E. K. Wilson, F.L.A. (Liverpool) 3; J. Brown, F.L.A. (Liverpool) 1; P. C. Gerrard, A.L.A. (Liverpool) 1; J. Sankey, F.L.A. (Manchester) 4; P. Sykes, F.L.A. (Manchester) 4; Miss A. H. Higgs, A.L.A. (Midland) 5; Miss E. Jerram, A.L.A. (Midland) 4; E. F. Ferry, F.L.A. (North Eastern) 3, succeeded by C. Muris, M.A., A.L.A. 2; N. Willox, A.L.A. (North Eastern) 5; R. I. J. Tully, F.L.A. (North Wales) 3; Miss M. R. Roberts (North Wales) 1; C. F. Shepherd, A.L.A. (South Wales) 5; J. N. Harris, F.L.A. (Sussex) 4; H. G. Holloway, A.L.A. (Sussex) 1; J. N. Stebbing, A.L.A. (Wessex) 5; P. Colehan, F.L.A. (Yorkshire) 5; A. B. Craven, F.L.A. (Yorkshire) 5; W. S. Hudson, F.L.A. (Honorary Treasurer) 5; A. C. Jones, F.L.A. (Honorary Editor) 5; Mrs. L. Martin (Honorary Education Secretary) 5; W. F. Broome, F. L. A. (Honorary Membership Secretary) 4; T. Mann, F.L.A. (Honorary Publications Officer) 5; W. Tynemouth, F.L.A. (Honorary Secretary) 5.

Through its representation on the Council and Committees, the Association of Assistant Librarians has continued to be actively represented in the work of the Library Association.

PUBLICATIONS.

It was reported last year that we had reached the climax of the first post-war publishing programme. This year has seen its virtual completion with the publication of *A primer of bibliography* by K. A. Mallaber, which was then in the press, and the launching of a further ambitious programme intended to fill some of the remaining gaps in our professional literature. Among the proposed new publications about which preliminary discussions have been held during the year are Primers of library bookbinding, "non-book" materials, library planning and building techniques, and library co-operation, an Introduction to county library practice and a Costume Index. Not all of these will necessarily see publication—plans for a Primer of work with young people have had to be abandoned for the time being because of the difficulty of finding a suitable author—but the selection of possible authors, the examination of manuscripts submitted and the continual review of the list of desirable publications in the light of suggestions received from Divisions and individual members are matters which constantly engage the attention of the Press and Publications Committee.

In addition to these new publications, a number of reprints and new editions have been put in hand, including a new edition of Phillips' *Primer of book classification*, a revised reprint of Hewitt's *Summary of public library law*, a fourth impression of the *Fiction index*, and the long-awaited new edition of *Sequels*. Revision of both volumes of the *A.A.L. Guide* was well in hand at the end of the year; new "pamphlet" guides to Final part 1 and Final parts 2 and 2a had already been published, and guides to the Registration Examination and Final parts 2 and 2b, together with a general introduction to the examinations, were in the press. The Association is greatly indebted to Dr. A. J. Walford, General Editor of the *A.A.L. Guides*, whose enthusiastic co-operation has enabled us to make such good progress with the revision of this series during the

year. The 1949 *Catalogue of the A.A.L. Library*, being now out of date, was withdrawn from the list of current publications.

The continued success of the *Assistant Librarian* in "providing a platform for the full and free discussion of professional and related matters" persuaded the Council to provide increased financial support for 1954, with the result that volume 47 contains 188 text pages and two large supplements of comment on the L.A. Examinations. The Council's action was well supported by contributors, and although 31 original articles (against 15 in 1953) and 44 letters were published, the Hon. Editor found it necessary to decline a larger proportion of the contributions received than ever before—certain evidence of the continued good health of our journal.

EDUCATION.

In 1954 a total of 1,320 correspondence courses were arranged, covering eighteen sections of the Syllabus. Of this total, 353 were short revision courses for students taking an examination again. An increased number of applications came from students overseas: 75 during the year.

In response to continued requests, arrangements were put in hand for two additional courses to cover Modern Literature and the Literature and Librarianship of the Social Sciences in Part 3 of the Final Examination.

This growth, both in the number of students and in courses offered, brings additional problems, and the Education Committee considered that the time was opportune to reconsider the whole question of policy and the future administration of correspondence courses, which were first organised on their present basis in 1931. Consequently, the Council appointed a sub-committee to investigate thoroughly and report.

The Council once again takes this annual opportunity of thanking those members of the profession who, by their willing service and co-operation, help to meet the demand for courses. It was a pleasure to welcome the following members to the panel during 1954:—E. T. Bryant, F.L.A., W. E. G. Critchley, F.L.A., J. W. Carter, F.L.A., L. F. Hasker, F.L.A., E. A. Willatts, F.L.A., and Miss J. M. Peterson, M.A., F.L.A.

Resignations were received with regret from:—E. V. Corbett, F.L.A., K. G. Hunt, B.A., F.L.A. (Editor), A. Joyce, F.L.A., A. R. Williams, F.L.A., and Miss B. Ramsbotham, F.L.A.

Mr. D. C. Henrik Jones, F.L.A., Librarian and Information Officer of the Library Association, reports that of the total number of 7,716 issues from the library at Chaucer House, 2,532 were from the A.A.L. Library section. The total number of books added to stock was 926, and of these 100 were added to the stock of the A.A.L. section, which now represents 2,053 of the complete stock of the library.

MEMBERSHIP.

The membership of the Section decreased very slightly during the year to 6,637, which is distributed among the Divisions as under:—

Bristol	..	..	188	North Wales	..	..	39
Devon and Cornwall	..	..	116	South Wales	..	..	199
Eastern	..	..	124	Sussex	..	..	124
East Midland	..	..	364	Wessex	..	..	181
Greater London	..	..	2,065	Yorkshire	..	..	464
Kent	..	..	186	Schools	..	..	209
Liverpool	..	..	449	Central	..	..	440
Manchester	..	..	530				
Midland	..	..	550				
North Eastern	..	..	409				
				Total	..		<u>6,637</u>

The comparative figures of membership over the past five years are:—

1949	1950	1951	1952	1953
5,615	5,660	6,162	6,490	6,643

Members of the Association are to be found in nearly all countries of the world.

A check on optings was made in June/July, 1954, and the number who had opted by July 1st, and who were therefore eligible to vote, was 5,941.

The distribution of *The Assistant Librarian*, which circulates throughout the world news and views of British Librarians, reached the record figure of 7,750 in August, 1954. A glance at the mailing list shows that our Journal is despatched to readers in Achimota, Auckland, Bangkok, Boolaroo, Boston, Mass., Brussels, Budapest, Budejovice, Calcutta, Cape Town, Chicago, Colombo, Copenhagen, Florida, Gothenburg, Grenada, The Hague, Hyderabad, Ibadan, Invercargill, Jerusalem, Khartoum, Leipzig, Leningrad, Louisiana, Malmö, Melbourne, Mississippi, Montreal, Moscow, New York, Orebro, Ostend, Patna, Potchefstroom, Prague, Rangoon, Rio de Janeiro, Sacramento, St. John's, San Antonio, Singapore, Tasmania, Toorak, Toronto, Trinidad, Vatican City, Zagreb . . . and many more.

THE FUTURE.

The future of the A.A.L. has probably been discussed more during the past year than at any other time since 1939, and at least one prophet from another place has forecast for it an early and painless death because it has ceased to have any *raison d'être*. Our achievements in recent years should effectively disprove this, and although our immediate objectives and means of attaining them may change with changing needs and conditions, our fundamental purpose—the welfare of the assistant in every type of library—has not altered for sixty years, and our present existence is well justified.

There is, however, still much to be accomplished, and our successes should not lead to complacency, nor confidence in our future to apathy—for the continuing prosperity of the Association depends upon the active support and participation of the membership as a whole, and particularly of the younger assistants from whom the leaders of to-morrow will be chosen. Whilst it is fitting that on the eve of the Diamond Jubilee the Council should decide to clarify and republish the aims and ambitions of the A.A.L., these can only be realised with the full co-operation and support of a vigorous membership, for without this the gloomy prophecy noted earlier might well be fulfilled.

OFFICERS OF THE A.A.L., 1955

- PRESIDENT: J. S. Bristow, F.L.A., Central Library, Croydon.
 VICE-PRESIDENT: W. Tynemouth, F.L.A., Central Library, Newcastle upon Tyne.
 HON. SECRETARY: E. E. Moon, F.L.A., Central Library, Chiswick, W.4.
 HON. TREASURER: W. S. Hudson, F.L.A., Central Library, Kensington, W.8.
 HON. EDITOR: A. C. Jones, F.L.A., Central Library, Hornsey, N.8.
 HON. SOLICITORS: Messrs. Metcalfe, Copeman & Pettefar,
 3 and 4, Clement's Inn, W.C.2.

OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL

- PUBLICATIONS: T. Mann, F.L.A., Central Library, Newcastle upon Tyne.
 EDUCATION: Mrs. L. Martin, Carnegie Library, Herne Hill Road, S.E.24.
 MEMBERSHIP: W. F. Broome, F.L.A., Central Library, Lambeth, S.W.2.

ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS
(Section of the Library Association)

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

1st January to 31st December, 1954

GENERAL ACCOUNT.

Income.	£ s. d.	Expenditure.	£ s. d.
To :—		By :—	
Balance brought forward		Distributing "Assistant Librarian" ...	230 10 4
from 1953	589 14 7	Payments to Divisions ...	573 12 6
Capitation grants	2,087 7 0	Councillors' expenses ...	521 11 9
Subscriptions	2 10 0	Film, "Resources discovered" ...	61 3 3
Stationery	3 8 6	Library (to L.A.) ...	110 0 0
Conference	224 0 2	Stationery	60 16 2
Index to Progress:—		Conference	234 12 9
Sales	25 4 0	Postage	29 1 7
Rentals	6 13 6	Clerical expenses ...	85 15 0
Miscellaneous	5 7 7	Presidential induction ...	8 14 3
		Annual General Meeting ...	9 18 2
		Election expenses ...	34 19 11
		Miscellaneous	3 0 0
			1,963 15 8
		Balance crd. fwd. to 1955	980 9 8
	<u>£2,944 5 4</u>		<u>£2,944 5 4</u>

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES ACCOUNT.

Income.	£ s. d.	Expenditure.	£ s. d.
To :—		By :—	
Balance brought forward		Tutors' expenses ...	2,397 2 6
from 1953	292 15 5	Hon. Educ. Secretary's Expenses ...	100 10 0
Students' fees	3,197 0 0	Postage	60 0 0
Sale of notebooks	7 4 9	Stationery	249 14 7
Refund of tutor's expenses	10 10 0	Refund of fees	10 10 0
		Standard courses:—	
		Compiling	9 9 0
		Editing	25 2 0
		Duplicating	249 19 1
		Collating	10 19 0
		Miscellaneous	3 15 0
			3,116 11 2
		Balance crd. fwd. to 1955	390 19 0
	<u>£3,507 10 2</u>		<u>£3,507 10 2</u>

PUBLICATIONS ACCOUNT.

Income.			Expenditure.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
To :—			By :—		
Balance brought forward			Stationery	43	19 6
from 1953	684	6 9	Royalties	337	2 5
Sales	2,256	4 1	Distribution	23	2 6
"Assistant Librarian" ...	200	0 1	Postages	80	0 0
Advertising	292	13 0	Insurance	4	8 3
			Printing: Cotton and		
			Glencross	210	0 0
			Binns	437	13 2
			Walford (2 parts) ...	117	12 3
			Miscellaneous	7	6 2
			Printing "Assistant Lib-		
			rarian"	1,117	6 9
			Clerical expenses ...	12	12 0
			Miscellaneous	8	9 3
				2,399	12 3
			Balance crd. fwd. to 1955	1,033	11 8
	<u>£3,433</u>	<u>3 11</u>		<u>£3,433</u>	<u>3 11</u>

BENEVOLENT FUND ACCOUNT.

Income.			Expenditure.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
To :—			By :—		
Balance brought forward					
from 1953	427	17 7	Balance crd. fwd. to 1955	439	13 0
Under credit interest, 1953		2 0			
Interest on P.O.S.B. A/c.		3 10			
Appreciation in value of					
N.S. Certs.	11	9 7			
	<u>£439</u>	<u>13 0</u>		<u>£439</u>	<u>13 0</u>

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS ON 31ST DECEMBER, 1954.

Assets.			Liabilities.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
To :—			By :—		
N.S. Certs. value at			Balance of fund on		
31/12/54	431	15 2	31/12/54	439	13 0
P.O.S.B. A/c.		7 17 10		<u>£439</u>	<u>13 0</u>
	<u>£439</u>	<u>13 0</u>			

All the above statements audited and found correct.

(Signed) R. J. ENSING

W. S. HUDSON, *Hon. Treasurer.*

M. WILDEN-HART

Hon. Auditors.

ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS

(Section of the Library Association)

60th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THIS YEAR the Annual General Meeting is being combined with the Presidential Induction and Address, and will take place at Chaucer House. A theatre visit and tea are being arranged for the afternoon.

AGENDA.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting, held in Chaucer House, London, W.C.1, on Thursday, May 20th, 1954.
 2. To receive the Annual Report of the Council, including the Annual Report of the Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Auditors for the year ended 31st December, 1954.
 3. To nominate and elect two Honorary Auditors, who, in accordance with Rule 5(c), may not be members of the Council.
 4. To consider the following motion submitted by P. D. Pocklington and H. D. Westacott:—

“That the rules governing the election of National Councillors be amended, and a clause be inserted to ensure that of the six councillors elected annually, at least three *must* be under 30 years of age.”
 5. Any other business.
-

The full programme is:—

- 2.30 Party to the Haymarket Theatre to see Thornton Wilder's play, “The Matchmaker.”
- 5.00 High tea at Lyons' Corner House, Coventry Street.
- 6.30 Chaucer House: Presidential Induction.
- 6.45 Annual General Meeting. (Agenda below).
- 7.15 Presidential Address by Mr. J. S. Bristow, F.L.A.

Sixty seats have been booked at the Haymarket and the combined cost of theatre and tea is 10s.

Members wishing to take part in the afternoon's programme should forward 10s. to MR. A. BILL, MARK HALL BRANCH LIBRARY, THE STOW, HARLOW, ESSEX, *before* April 15th. Members wishing to forward a booking fee of 2s. 6d. (not returnable) and the rest later may do so, provided that the balance is received before April 15th.

Mr. Bill will also be glad to hear from any provincial members who would like overnight accommodation either before or after the meeting.

THE FUTURE OF THE A.A.L.

[The following invited contributions are intended only as a beginning to the discussion of this vital question. It will be noticed that they come mostly from senior members of our Association (Yes, even Mr. Hutchings is a member!) and we hope that younger assistants will now accept a general invitation to come forward with their comments and suggestions. Our columns are wide open for further discussion, and every attempt will be made to find room for all worthwhile letters received. Please be as brief as possible—and it always helps greatly if letters are typed and double-spaced.—Hon. Ed.].

F. G. B. HUTCHINGS

(City Librarian, Leeds; Hon. Treasurer, Library Association).

A SOCIETY is usually established for some purpose: it endures so long as the purpose endures. Once that disappears the society begins to fade; too often, however, life lingers on supported by artificial aids and recollections of causes fought and won. The Association of Assistant Librarians was formed to unite assistants and promote their interests at a time when chief librarians were joined together in the Library Association. One can sense from the past the stuffed-shirt superiority of the one and the down-at-heel optimism of the other. Now we are all down-at-heel and superiority declines with age. The venerable used to assume frock coat and beard: the frock coat has given way to Edwardian affectation and the beard has become the prerogative of the young.

The extension of the Library Association to include all library assistants who wished to qualify as librarians was a constitutional change set in a changing social environment; that is, it could not have happened without circumstances being present to encourage it. The First World War gave a rude shock to the old order of the ruled and the ruler. There was an almost painful belief in the new world, housing schemes were heralded as "homes fit for heroes to live in," it was a time of intense gaiety and good fellowship, optimism and change were in the air. Why, there was even a new library act, and a departmental committee of the then Board of Education on public libraries. If the promise had to be fulfilled, then there had, amongst other things, to be a stronger Association and more librarians. The C.U.K.T., a measure of self-help, and the extension of the membership made Chaucer House possible; but the extension of membership, almost by compulsion, also meant extending the vote to the young who, being more numerous, found themselves with the power. Here indeed is an example of the so-called "forward march" of democracy. In the early years of the change it was inevitable that there should be tension; the elders had not adjusted themselves to substituting persuasion for authority, their methods promoted the arrogance of the enfranchised young. There were conflicts, the council of the elders was defeated more than once; but now, it seems to me, these are matters which belong to the past: the adjustments have been made and the marriage of convenience has become something of a success. Moreover it has produced a progeny.

It is a functional progeny in the form of branches and sections of the Library Association. Each part of the country now has its branch; the sections are developing on an area basis. Librarians are no longer divided into the "haves" and "have-nots"; but are linked together by an over-riding professionalism which takes note of location and special

interests. What place is there now for the Association of Assistant Librarians? If there is a place I find it difficult to discover. Little of the work it now does is distinctive (although it may be distinguished). It has a publications programme, and very good it is; but it is not clearly distinct from the Library Association programme. It produces *The Assistant Librarian* which represents the young idea and does it very well—particularly well of late—but if the change in periodical publication before the Library Association Council comes about, wholly or in part, it will be difficult to find a justification for *The Assistant Librarian*. It runs correspondence courses (and there is still a place for them); but these could, presumably, be run by the Library Association, not to mention the fact that the full-time schools have altered greatly the whole outlook on tuition. It provides a “ginger group” for the Library Association. Now this is important on the assumption that it is necessary; but it has been my experience in recent years that the need has been declining as the Library Association Council has broadened the basis of its representation.

Having said all this I do not propose to enter upon suggestions as to the form the obsequies should take; indeed, I have been at pains to show that time will bring about change without external encouragement. More than this, I am persuaded that the less external encouragement there is, the more rapid will be the decline; nothing gives a greater stimulus to life than the threat of sudden death. All I ask is that the body should not be kept alive unduly by artificial aids, and that when the time comes we may all mourn a friend who has not lingered beyond sufferance.

One last word. I believe the task of the future is to unite the diverse elements which constitute the library profession, and in that unity to carry our experience and strength beyond the shores of this country. There is a new world struggling to be born in which librarians have a part to play; I hope they will not fail by being absorbed and obsessed in maintaining differences which have lost their relevance.

W. TYNEMOUTH

(Deputy Librarian, Newcastle upon Tyne, Vice-President, A.A.L.).

IT IS AN HONOUR to be able to contribute something to our jubilee. The next event of importance will, I suppose, be the centenary, and having already been described as one of the A.A.L.'s “old men,” the honour must be accepted now.

When the centenary does come I wonder if there will still be someone in the Library Association (which will not then be 100) saying that the A.A.L. is “superfluous” or “an anomaly” and planning from one step behind what they will do when they are one step in front.

One of the saddest features of the present British way of life is the rash of societies for the prevention of this, that, and the other, which collectively form a milk-and-water variation of “1984.” This negative view of life has even spread to some of our churches, so that they would rather prevent a hundred people from visiting a cinema on Sunday than they would direct the same energy to adding a single additional member to a congregation.

It is, therefore, not surprising that certain negative minds in the Library Association are reviving an attempt to exterminate the A.A.L. There are some “positivists” who believe that the Library Association can so far develop and increase the opportunities of its members to share in its many interests that the A.A.L. will become superfluous. But these individuals are few—and the day is not yet at hand.

Indeed, the greatest volume of sound appears to come from those with allegedly tidy minds who object to the simultaneous vertical and horizontal classification of the Library Association. In one such discussion a member was heard to tell his audience that the co-ordinate classes of the Library Association should be mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive, that is to say, co-extensive with the *summum genus*. That esoteric tosh is presumably lifted from Phillips's treatise on the rag trade, and is possibly all right when applied to the theory of classification; but we have in the British Constitution, as opposed to the French, a proof that organizations do not work the better for being theoretically logical.

The A.A.L. provides an opportunity for service in its Divisional organizations and in its correspondence courses for those who have benefited in the past to repay their debts in the future. It provides opportunities for professional activity which the L.A. has copied by making its branch coverage national—without, it should be noticed, impairing the divisional activity of the A.A.L.

One of the criticisms I have recently heard voiced about the A.A.L. is that it is living on its past glories. Even its sternest critics admit to these past glories, and there are those who admit that the A.A.L. has achieved success in several directions within the immediate past. Apart from such accomplished facts as the Tighe Report, *Index to Progress*, and several of its publications, the A.A.L. has contributed much to such awareness and activity as exists in purely professional matters, as well as in the realm of professional politics.

This rôle of a ginger-group is not confined to prodding the L.A. on grading, conditions of service, the Association finances and the hours of opening of the Chaucer House Library, but in nearly all Divisions extends to an awakening of interest and practical work on the things that matter in librarianship.

In the fields of education and publications the A.A.L. has long played an important part. "The Martins" have made an immense contribution, but I am sure they would be the first to acknowledge the parts played by others, putting back something of the benefit they had earlier drawn.

The importance of the opportunities given by the A.A.L.'s divisional organization for practice in public speaking, committee work, holding office, and representing the points of view of others can not be over-estimated. The value goes far beyond that: those are only the obvious points; most important is the exchange of ideas and comradeship with professional colleagues in other libraries, often other *types* of libraries.

Does the A.A.L. duplicate the L.A.? This is a question often asked, and as both have conferences, regional organizations and publications, is perhaps an obvious point to raise. Surely, however, the L.A. conference, its Branch meetings and the *Record* should be concerned with professional matters at the highest possible level.

Chartered librarians should, however, continue to attend A.A.L. divisional meetings in order to contribute, without dominating, for the benefit of those between G.C.E. and A.P.T.—with the devil and the deep blue sea thrown in each June and December.

Beginning as I did in a small library, I know the value divisional meetings, correspondence courses and the *Assistant* were to me. I could name those who helped and influenced me, but I feel sure they would be more satisfied if I in my turn were to hand on the torch.

For those who are interested in the past, the files of the *Assistant Librarian* and its predecessor in title, together with our annual reports, will provide adequate grounds for research. Personally, I am only inter-

ested in the future and the responsibility of that must pass increasingly to the generations which are following. But let me in advance answer the criticisms which are bound to be made of the number of "old men" in the A.A.L. This presumably refers to those of us who are but little more than half-way on the road to our portrait by Graham Sutherland. Perhaps those who make this criticism forget that six years disappeared from our professional lives and that the number of us was unhappily reduced. This partial gap is now being bridged, but it should be remembered that there is no age limit for those who wish to put something into the A.A.L.

MISS E. J. WILLSON

(*Chief Assistant, Hammersmith P.L.; A.A.L. National Councillor.*)

RECENTLY there has been criticism of the A.A.L. Mr. Hutchings, for example, thinks it has outgrown its usefulness; criticism from such a source cannot be ignored and may be of real value if those who disagree are led to think about the A.A.L. as it is and as it ought to be, during its jubilee year, instead of using the occasion for a review of past achievements and for mutual congratulation.

What does the A.A.L. do to justify its existence and capitation (at the 1929 level) from the Library Association? It runs correspondence courses—but others could do this even if they could not do it so cheaply nor afford to organize economically unprofitable courses simply because one or two students need them. The A.A.L. issues a monthly journal which pays particular attention to the needs of students and is read all over the world; on the other hand if the *Assistant Librarian* ceased publication, some of its liveliness might leaven other journals. The A.A.L. commissions and publishes textbooks; other bodies do this, although not so cheaply. The A.A.L. has a Benevolent Fund and owns the "Students' Library" now administered by the Librarian of the Library Association. It organizes an annual conference which is different, in that not only is it held in a place which has libraries worth visiting, but no important people attend and everyone takes part in the discussions. These services are valuable, but if the A.A.L. ceased to provide them it would still have much of unique value to offer.

Firstly it is the only professional body which covers the whole country, includes workers from all types of library and excludes employers from membership and chief librarians from office. It is therefore able to put forward the viewpoint of younger people, to be more frank in its criticisms and regard each problem with some measure of detachment.

Secondly it provides an alternative to official policy. Without prating in the fashionable way about democracy, it can be recognised that it is of utmost value for the library profession to have such a body which is part of the official organization yet with a tradition of independence of its own. However reformed the Council of the Library Association becomes, it is hardly likely to reach such a state of perfection that criticism is no longer needed. No one can measure the debt a household owes to its watchdog until the watchdog is no longer there. There is always a tendency for precautionary measures which succeed to appear unnecessary. I think that if the A.A.L. did not exist it would be necessary to invent one.

Thirdly the A.A.L. provides a training ground in Committee work, organization and public speaking. It could be argued that even if Divisions did no useful work in arranging professional and social meetings

and visits, providing revision schools, publishing newsheets and surveys and all the other important work they do, the training they give their members alone would justify their existence. There may be some areas where, at a particular time, the Branch seems to provide all the training needed, but such occasions are isolated. In a Branch such as the London and Home Counties a high proportion of the elected members of its committee are, very properly, chief librarians who remain on it for years; in such an area very few assistants would have the chance of gaining committee experience if they had to rely on the Branch. That the A.A.L. has been a great training ground even its sternest critics do not deny, and there seems no reason to doubt that it will continue to be so, even if some of those who have profited by its training themselves are ready to deny it to their successors.

That the youngest members of the profession are not often found on the A.A.L. Council or even on the Committees of its Divisions is sometimes regarded as a proof that the A.A.L. has lost its appeal to assistants. When you consider, however, the examinations for which a young assistant has to study to-day and compare them with those for which the previous generation sat and remember that the generation before was mostly spared them altogether, the wonder is not that so few, but that so many, are willing to jeopardize their future by working for the A.A.L. before they are fully qualified. The days when we left school at fourteen and were chief librarians at twenty-four belong to the past.

How should the A.A.L. develop in the future? Obviously it must continue the work I have already mentioned, but at the present time it has an opportunity to serve the profession which, if ignored, may not occur again. Few things are more important in a small profession like ours than unity—the more groups splinter away the greater is the danger that we shall be disregarded to the detriment of our work. I believe that the future policy of the A.A.L. should be an active one to unite all workers in libraries. The things we have in common are so much greater than our differences. The greatest advances of post-war librarianship are the development of specialization and co-operation. We find public libraries, other than those of the great cities, appointing specialists such as music librarians and archivists and even the smallest library has learnt that it can increase its usefulness to its own community, as well as to the world at large, by some measure of specialization. Many schemes of co-operation between different types of library have come into being (*Scotapll* and *Cicris*, for example), but we still have insufficient co-operation between assistants from different types of library. At present the majority of members of the Library Association come from rate-supported libraries, the 10 per cent. who do not are obliged to be on the defensive and urge the case for special librarians in season and out while public librarians are amused or resentful. Greater specialization and opportunities for co-operation lie in the future, and common sense would seem to indicate that the sooner special librarians, who now feel themselves to be outside the main stream, become part of it, the better for us all. The A.A.L. should give non-public librarians a place on its Council and encourage Divisions, especially in areas where the specialist sections are unable to form local organizations, to bring such members on to their Committees by co-option. The Greater London Division made this its policy some time ago and now three or four members from non-public libraries get elected each year and make valuable contributions to its work. We have nothing to fear and much to gain from the mixing of assistants from all types of library. The assistant from a special library

often works on a small staff and has a greater need of the A.A.L. than the public library assistant who may belong to a staff guild and has N.A.L.G.O. round the corner. The A.A.L. has done much to improve the lot of the public library assistant; at present the G.L.D. is investigating conditions in non-public libraries. This is a beginning.

Another major problem to the solution of which the A.A.L. can make a valuable contribution is that of staff recruitment and staff relationships. The A.A.L. might make a film to introduce the profession to young people leaving school; it might collect facts on why those who enter librarianship do so as well as why they leave; it might draw up a plan to fit graduates into public library staffs without friction and decide on a practicable division of duties into professional and non-professional. On such problems there is much the A.A.L. can do because it does not represent those in authority.

I do not see the A.A.L. of the future as a trades union or returning to a perilous, and possibly penurious, independence, but I do see it as a vital force in the creation of a united profession, and in the training of the librarians of the future—and as a force which, because of the contribution it makes, will continue to earn the right to criticise.

R. J. HOY

(Deputy Librarian, School of Oriental and African Studies).

THERE MAY BE some psychological explanation for the A.A.L.'s pre-occupation with its own future—perhaps a feeling of insecurity is indicated. Whatever the reason may be, the subject has repeatedly cropped up in recent years. In the *Assistant Librarian* of October, 1951, Mr. Sharr made a weighty defence of the A.A.L.; it seemed to me that some of his arguments were suspect, and I attempted a reply in the issue of December of the same year. Since these two contributions are available in print, no useful purpose is served by going over the whole of the ground again except to pick out some points of especial importance.

One point to which the A.A.L. might well devote attention is whether it is in accordance with present conditions and future trends to have an association devoted exclusively to the interests of assistants—presumably as against those of chief librarians. Even as recently as before the war there might have been some substance in this antiposition of chiefs and the rest, but to maintain the attitude now displays what seems to me to be ignorance of the facts of life. My own experience suggests that in the larger staffs, at least, the interests of the seniors tend to approximate more closely to those of the chiefs than to those of the juniors. Furthermore, the large body of special libraries which have come into prominence since the war are often organised with small staffs, in which the chief does many jobs done by assistants elsewhere. Such people could make a notable contribution to the work of the A.A.L., but presumably they are excluded, at least from office, by the Association's terms of reference.

In fact, the Association does tacitly recognise the impossibility of catering substantially for *all* non-chiefs; its activities tend to canalise themselves into two main streams, as I have indicated below.

I have argued elsewhere that we might have seen a Municipal Libraries Section in existence long since but for the fact that the municipal librarians "captured" the Branch committees; the Branches have thus served in many ways as a substitute for a Municipal Libraries Sec-

tion. I would add that a contributory factor has been the existence of the A.A.L., to which the younger municipal librarians would adhere and make their mark. A general result of all this has been a distortion of the L.A., which has become increasingly clear as more and more non-municipal sections have been formed. The A.A.L. claims to be representative of all types of librarian, and when accused of public library bias the reply is usually that the non-public librarians do not take the opportunities open to them to pull their weight in Association affairs. So long as election to committees goes by simple majority, special librarians, except, perhaps, in London, find it difficult, if not impossible, to get elected. But even when they are interested and would like to help they are confronted with the fact that when, for instance, any part of the Association holds a meeting on "books" or "authors," those selected are invariably literary ones; I have yet to see an announcement of an A.A.L. meeting dealing with non-literary books or authors. In other words, the A.A.L. looks like a public library body; its impact on people is that of a public library body; and to the assistant who is not old in membership of the L.A., these are the things which count and which influence action. I suggest, therefore, that another point to which those responsible for the future of the A.A.L. should devote themselves is the organisation of a constitution which will make that body demonstrably all-embracing and of interest to every type of librarian.

My own impression is that juniors do not play the part in the affairs of the special sections which they might. No doubt the reasons are varied, and cannot all be dealt with by the A.A.L. One reason which I have heard is that the special sections are relatively small, and they tend to be run by the senior members; meetings which are held are attended largely by seniors, i.e., potential employers. Juniors are diffident about speaking in such company, yet the sections could benefit very greatly from the contributions which these juniors could make; they have an energy and a freshness of outlook all too often lacking from the make-up of seniors. One's mind boggles at the idea of a series of junior sections, but it would be worth while for the A.A.L. to consider how far it could re-model itself in this direction.

In the history of the A.A.L. there are two-things which it has done especially well. One is to provide means whereby younger members of the profession can learn to speak in committee and in public; where experience of committee work can be obtained, and sometimes also the joys of holding office. There must be many public librarians who never cease to bless their experiences in the A.A.L., as a preparation for the posts they now hold. The other thing is the organisation of correspondence courses for professional examinations. I incline more and more to the view that the L.A. should assume responsibility for these courses; it offends my sense of what is proper that the Association should accept responsibility only for the standards and for the examination papers, leaving it to voluntary labour to provide the correspondence courses. It would seem to be a proper extension of the Education Department's functions to take over the responsibility for these courses, and the approaching end of the "Martin era" seems a good time to look into this.

Failing any dramatic developments, the A.A.L. can simply carry on as usual, and this is no doubt what will happen. But it may be forced to consider consequential changes if a Municipal Libraries Section comes into existence; if this were to happen I think it would provide a great impetus towards the development of the A.A.L. into a junior version of all the sections. It would need only a change of view

and emphasis to make this possible now, but so long as the municipal librarians continue to rule the roost within the L.A., there seems no reason to expect any such changes.

R. STOKES

(Director, School of Librarianship, Loughborough College).

IT IS A HEALTHY thing for an institution to question the reason for its existence from time to time and to consider how adequately it is meeting the just demands which are made upon it. If it is wise, some reorientation of its programme will frequently result. In this present discussion it should be no part of the A.A.L.'s argument to point to its past glories as the major reason for its continuance. Such triumphs are undoubtedly—but they are past. What is needed is a clear statement of the aims and objects of the Association with reasoned arguments as to why this Association is the best one to carry out such work. The chief policy statements of the A.A.L. seem not to have changed very much since the 1930's; yet the profession has changed greatly. Of what importance now is the idea of providing a forum in which the younger assistant can speak without fear of his chief's disapproval? What is the correlation between the publication policies of the A.A.L. and the L.A.? What is the general pattern of the A.A.L. educational policy in the changed circumstances created by the Schools of Librarianship?

It is not simple chance that this present argument has arisen at the same time as the freshly voiced demand for a Municipal Library Section of the L.A. The sections of the L.A. have grown up in a sporadic fashion over the years, and they are now no longer appropriate for the work which needs to be done. What is now needed is not simply an examination of the A.A.L., but of the whole principle and structure of the L.A. Sections, and this should be put in hand immediately.

P. D. POCKLINGTON

(Chief Assistant, Chelmsford P.L.; G.L.D. Education Secretary).

SO THE A.A.L. is now 60 years old. Amazing, isn't it? Hurrah for 60 glorious years and stand by for a repeat performance! There *will* be a repeat performance, won't there? Another 60 glorious years?

Apparently the issue is in some doubt. Voices can be heard—both from without and within the A.A.L. The voices from without congratulate the Association on its good work in the past and suggest that the time for retirement has now been reached. "Let the Branches now take over; they can do the job just as well if not better." An interesting thought, isn't it, but not one to concern us here and now. We are not unduly worried at our *external* critics; indeed, the A.A.L. rather seems to thrive on criticism. The more the swords are waved and the bugles blown, the stouter our ramparts. But what of the voices from within?

Haven't you heard them at meetings? "What's going to happen to the A.A.L.?" says one. "I'm worried about the A.A.L." another. Are you worried? Am I worried? Perhaps we are just a little. But what about young Fred out at the branch or little Kate who's just failed Entrance for the second time? They're members of the A.A.L. Are they worried? Of course not—they couldn't care less! And there are hundreds more like them; hundreds, possibly thousands of members of this so-called virile association of ours who just couldn't care less about its future. Why?

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR BINDING

FICTION

In Full Rexine with new reinforced unsewn binding our "Standard Fiction Binding" is the most economic in the country.

JUVENILE "FLATS"

We can solve the problems of this class of work with an almost unbreakable binding that has been proved in Libraries, and that we have evolved for all flat ephemeral work at a reasonable price.

NON FICTION AND MUSIC

A rexine spine with waterproof cloth plus a new and greatly improved joint will give hard and long wear to all volumes at a very moderate range of prices.

We will be very happy to rebind any volumes published in any unsewn binding other than spiral bindings.

We must emphasise that we guarantee all work undertaken by us in any process against fair wear and tear and Library usage

ALL ENQUIRIES WELCOME AT **BENLOCK LIMITED**

SOUTH BANK · MIDDLESBROUGH · YORKS.

Berkshire Bookbinding Co., Ltd.

(Directors J. E. Cook and P. E. Cook)

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS

NON - FICTION AND
REFERENCE BINDINGS
ARE OUR SPECIALITY

**27, ELDON TERRACE
READING, BERKS.**

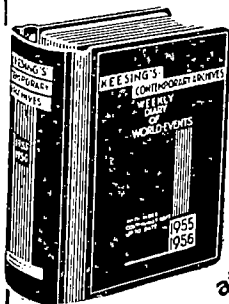
Telephone: Reading 60688.

CRAMERS *for MUSIC*

MUSICAL LITERATURE
AND MUSIC BINDING

**139, New Bond Street
London, W.1**

★ Special Music Enquiry Bureau



LOOK

at these years

in **KEESING'S**
documentation of our day

Perhaps, in common with "Ginger" Smith, they feel a vast gulf between themselves and their representative body, the A.A.L. Council. Well, let us examine this Council in some detail and see what it is made up of.

Consider the latest Annual Report of the A.A.L. available at the time of writing, that for the year 1953 (*Assistant Librarian*, April, 1954). Included in this report is a list of names of those who attended Council meetings during the year—and what fascinating reading it makes! 53 people are listed as having represented you and me on the A.A.L. Council during 1953. Who are these people? The cream of the under-30's? The chartered librarians of to-morrow with just a sprinkling of the A.L.A.'s and an odd F.L.A. to preserve the continuity of things? Ha! Ha! You'll be lucky! Of these 53 assistant librarians, 3, and only 3, are unqualified! That's interesting, isn't it, especially when one reads in the *L.A.R.* Jan. 1955 that there are still at least 2 unqualified assistants to every one on the Register. And, lest one should be misguided enough to think that the greater majority of these 50 qualified representatives of ours are bright young Associates, let me hasten to add that no less than 35 of them are Fellows.

What does this go to prove? Well, for a start it means that the under 23's have almost no say in Council, and the under 25's don't do so well either. In short, our teen-aged assistants (and surely, if this Association exists for anybody it is for them!) are not likely to have a lot in common with their representatives on the A.A.L. Council.

Let me tell you some more. By custom, no Chief Librarian sits on the A.A.L. Council, but there are no rules or customs so restricting Deputies. Ahhh!—I see you've guessed it already. Yes, there are a number of Deputies amongst our 53—12, in fact. Pretty big Deputies, too, some of them; Hull, Sheffield, Portsmouth—not at all the sort of Deputyships likely to come the way of smart young assistants in their 20's. Still, we must have some heavy guns and elder statesmen on our Council if it is to carry any weight at all with Big Brother, so we will leave our 12 Deputies and pass on to another interesting aspect concerning these 53 representatives of ours.

From the statistical tables printed in the *L.A.R.* Jan. 1955, it will be seen that more than half the public libraries in this country serve populations of under 50,000. There is, of course, nothing remarkable in this. What is, however, if not remarkable at least a trifle disconcerting, is the fact that the 326 libraries serving the smaller population groups supply only 2 Councillors, whilst the remaining 253 libraries furnish 45 Councillors. Not to put too fine a point on it, we have a "big system" Council.

So there we are. Whatever we may feel about the actions of the Council (and I, personally, think they are doing a pretty good job), there can be little doubt that as a representative body of *assistants* it is a little top-heavy. Small wonder, therefore, that to large numbers of our younger members and particularly to those working in small systems, the A.A.L. Council seems a very remote body far removed from the day-to-day problems of assistants.

What of the future? It is of little use to trace the causes of discontent without suggesting ways and means of reform. For years past, Presidential Addresses have called on the younger members to come forward and play a more prominent part in the affairs of the A.A.L., but with little result. Clearly some more concrete form of inducement must be offered.

To begin with, I wonder how many junior assistants realise what

THE
HOLT-JACKSON
BOOK COMPANY
LIMITED



*Public and County
Library Booksellers*



MONTAUBAN
CHAMBERS,
ST. ANNES-ON-SEA,
LANCS.

Telephone: St. Annes 575



London Showroom:
13, BRITTON STREET,
CLERKENWELL ROAD, E.C.1
Telephone: Clerkenwell 3250.

A. M. HALDANE
LTD.



WE SPECIALISE IN
CHILDREN'S BOOKS
listed and annotated in our
monthly *Juvenile Guide*



B.N.B. ORDERS



SPECIAL REQUESTS



PROMPT SERVICE
especially in the London
Area



5, DENMARK STREET,
CHARING CROSS ROAD,
W.C.2

TEMple Bar 3650

Councillorship entails. It is all very well to call on the young to "have a go," but they should be given a clear idea of what they are letting themselves in for. The Annual Report states: "There were five Council meetings during the year." Where were these meetings held and how long did they last? Can one get time off to attend? Who pays the Councillors' rail fares? These are all important questions which must be answered for a chap thinking of taking the big step. The Secretary could answer them all with ease, but no doubt has enough to do already without filling in questionnaires from prospective Councillors. Surely a short paragraph in the *Assistant Librarian* as an appendage to the notice calling for nominations would be a sensible move in the right direction. There may well be young people willing and able to serve on the Council who have taken no active steps in the matter because they think Councillorship entails more in time and expense than is actually the case.

Mention of the *Assistant Librarian* brings me to my second point. A frequent complaint at election times is that the names before us are simply names. "Never heard of him," "Who's this one?" "Give the girl a vote"—such comments from assistants conning their ballot papers are familiar to us all. If we really believe in the value of a strong, representative Council, then surely it is well worth while reserving space in the *Assistant Librarian* for election addresses. It may sound a bit strange—possibly a little too political—but surely we, the electorate, have a right to know *something* about these names on the ballot paper. For one thing, it would be useful to know *why* candidates are putting up for election and what they hope to accomplish if successful. To my way of thinking, a short election address by each candidate should be made compulsory, and if the whole of one issue of the *Assistant* were so taken up, I would think the space well used.

My third suggested reform again concerns the election of National Councillors. At present there are two ways of gaining a seat on the A.A.L. Council. One is to contest one of the six National seats, the other is to get on as a regional representative via the divisional committee. At the moment no division (apart from G.L.D.) has more than 2 representatives on the Council, and half of them have only 1. In the circumstances, therefore, divisions naturally choose from their most experienced members the one or two reps. they send to the A.A.L. Council. Quite right and proper, too, but it's hard luck on any of the bright young things who have got on to divisional committees! Unless they're awfully, awfully bright a lot of the gloss will have worn off them before they're considered as divisional representatives. To ensure that there shall be *some* young people on the Council (and this seems to me to be most imperative), I can think of no better way than by putting some form of age-limit on National Councillors, or at least on some of them. Why not 3 out of the 6 seats to be reserved for the under-30's?

Some of you will no doubt have noticed that I have omitted any mention of the special librarians and their representation on the A.A.L. Council. The reason for this is quite simple. They have a very good case, but I'm a public librarian and might well spoil it if I tried to put it.

I have mentioned a few of the factors that I feel may well be the cause of apathy amongst the younger element of the profession and suggested possible solutions.

I think at this stage I would do well to retire gracefully and await the tumult and the shouting. I hope there *will* be some tumult and shouting. But, perhaps you all agree with me? Or is it that you just couldn't care less!

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians.

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 48. No. 5

MAY, 1955

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE

IN VIEW of the recent considerable increase in the amount of work of the Hon. Editor—who is responsible not only for the *Assistant Librarian*, but also for the conduct of the Association's publishing programme—the Council has decided that at the end of this year the post shall be divided into two: Hon. Editor, *Assistant Librarian*, and Hon. Publications Officer. It is likely that the present post of Hon. Publications Officer, which is concerned with the *sale and distribution* of publications, will shortly be abolished, and other arrangements made for that aspect of the Association's work.

The duties which will fall to the two proposed officers are briefly as follows:—

HON. EDITOR, *ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN*

The Hon. Editor will in future be responsible solely for editing the *Assistant Librarian*, which is now published monthly. Copy is sent to the printer approximately one month before publication, and a proof is checked two weeks later. These times are sufficiently flexible to allow for holidays and other interruptions.

The Hon. Editor will remain, as at present, an Officer of the Association, elected annually and responsible to the membership at large. He will be a member of the Council, and will report to the Press and Publications Committee.

HON. PUBLICATIONS OFFICER

The Hon. Publications Officer will be responsible to the Council, through the Press and Publications Committee, for the publishing programme of the Association. He will be concerned chiefly with seeing publications through the press, including correspondence with authors, detailed arrangements with printers (estimates, typographical layout, etc.), proof-reading and distribution of review copies. He will also be required from time to time to investigate the need for certain projected publications, to make preliminary approaches to possible authors, and generally to deal with all matters, except those pertaining to the *Assistant Librarian*, arising from meetings of the Press and Publications Committee, to which he will act as secretary.

The Hon. Publications Officer will be an Officer of the Council, appointed by the Council at its first meeting each year. As such he will have the right to contribute to the discussion of any matter before Council, but may vote only in his own committee.

METHOD OF APPOINTMENT

Hon. Editor. It is open to any two members of the Association to put forward a nominee for the post of Hon. Editor at the Annual Election, and any such nominee may be appointed. It has been the custom, however, for the Council to consider all applications submitted to it before-

hand, with the object of putting one forward as the Council's own nominee. Since the Council consists of representatives of all Divisions, this has been found to be the most satisfactory way of determining the most generally acceptable candidate.

Hon. Publications Officer. In order that the 1956 Council may appoint Officers of the Council (including the new Hon. Publications Officer) without delay at its January meeting, it is important that the 1955 Council should have the opportunity of discussing nominations and making firm recommendations to its successor.

Appointments to these two offices will be discussed by the Council at its May and September meetings and the present Hon. Editor has already indicated that he is unable to accept nomination to either post. Any member who would like to be considered for either nomination is invited to write as soon as possible to his own Divisional Hon. Secretary, who will pass all applications approved by the Divisional Committee to the Hon. Secretary of the Association.

It will be obvious that two excellent opportunities exist for members to contribute in a substantial way to the work of the Association, and at the same time to obtain first-hand experience of matters both professional and bibliographical which will be invaluable to them in the future. The Hon. Editor will be very glad to answer enquiries for further specific information about either of the posts, but it is suggested that members wishing to be considered for nomination should write in the first instance to the Hon. Secretary of their own Division.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

A.A.L. CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

Tutors are urgently required for the following Final sections of the syllabus—Part 1, *Bibliography and Book Section*; Part 2, *Library Organisation and Administration: General Paper* and (a) *Public Libraries*; Part 4 (d), *Historical Bibliography*.

Applications are invited from members who are Fellows of the Library

Association. Forms may be obtained from Mrs. L. Martin, Carnegie Library, Herne Hill Road, London, S.E.24.

ASSISTANCE TO READERS

Mr. P. Hepworth, City Librarian of Norwich and author of our *Primer of assistance to readers*, would like to have suggestions and comments from tutors and others for possible incorporation in a new edition.

THAT DATE!

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held at Chaucer House on *Wednesday, May 4th*. This information, though included in the notice in our February issue, was omitted from the otherwise full details published last month. It has since been brought to your attention by all the means at

our disposal, and we hope for another enjoyable and lively meeting. The evening meeting begins at 6.30 p.m., but please refer to the April issue for full details. This issue also contains the Annual Report, and should be brought to the meeting for reference.

WEDNESDAY, 4TH MAY.

SELLING THE LIBRARY SERVICE

The A.A.L. 6th Annual Week-end Conference was held in Birmingham on 1st—3rd April. Theme: *Publicity and Public Relations*.

"Scottish conferences are much more austere," said W. E. Tyler, of Glasgow Library School at 2 o'clock on Sunday morning. The same might be said for most English conferences, but we have not found that they are on that account more successful. The 92 delegates (a misnomer which has crept, like "syndicates," into our conference jargon) at Birmingham crammed a prodigious amount of work and play into their 48 hours, got to grips with their subject as no previous conference in this series has succeeded in doing, and produced a welter of constructive resolutions which will give the A.A.L. Council food for thought for many months to come.

DISPLAY

The first of these resolutions expressed the unanimous opinion of the conference as to the importance of display work in libraries, and its equally deep conviction that the L.A. does not sufficiently appreciate this importance:

1. **The A.A.L. Council should instruct its representatives on the appropriate moderating committees to press for greater emphasis on the subject of display in the L.A. syllabus.**

Delegates were suitably horrified at any suggestion that the syllabus should be changed, but it was pointed out that no changes were in fact necessary; more than one part of the syllabus already included aspects of display work, but these are seldom reflected in the papers set. Display was a technique comparable to cataloguing and classification; extremists held that cat. and class. were but facets of display.

Discussion of the lack of suitably skilled staff, and of time in which to prepare displays, crystallized into the view that both staff and time would be forthcoming when librarians could be convinced, and could convince their employers, of the importance of display. Ideally, display work should be done by full-time professional artists, but co-operation with local art schools, photographic societies and other bodies could be fruitful, and libraries should co-operate in the interchange of good publicity material.

The success of the recent "Chaucer House" exhibition of Storage Methods prompted the second resolution:—

2. **That an exhibition of commercial display materials should be arranged, initially at Chaucer House, but later if possible to travel in the provinces.** (Discussion leader's note on this: "It was felt that one of the places it had better travel to was the L.A. Conference, for the benefit of the brass".)

And arising from this:

3. **That the A.A.L. should arrange a week-end school on display methods, preferably in conjunction with the exhibition of materials.**

One of the reasons put forward for the amateurishness of much of

our present display work was ignorance of such good work as was being done elsewhere, and consequent lack of standards of comparison. This brought forth two recommendations:—

4. **That the editor of the *L. A. Record* should be asked to publish a note inviting the co-operation of librarians in keeping the files of display and publicity material in the L.A. Library up-to-date; and that assistants should try to ensure that copies of photographs of exhibitions and other publicity material in their own libraries are sent to Chaucer House.**
5. **That the editor of the *Assistant Librarian* should consider the introduction of a regular "Display of the Month" feature.**

Finally (on the subject of Display) the recommendation:

6. **That the A.A.L. Press and Publications Committee should consider publishing a *Primer of Display Work and Publicity***

thought not enthusiastically supported in the final general session, was in fact passed on for further consideration.

EXHIBITIONS AND EXTENSION WORK

This, the second of the four headings under which "Publicity and Public Relations" was discussed, was held to include every form of exploitation by the library of its resources, other than by printed publicity and display within the library. A good library service was a pre-requisite—extension work should not be indulged in at the expense of the basic service.

The first problem—whether the basic "good library service" should include books only or other media of communication such as films and gramophone records—was resolved by agreement that if the librarian was to concern himself with books only, then sooner or later other provision would be made for films and gramophone records, and there might well be a General Cultural Officer in charge of all such services. The problem was simply one of definition—is "librarian" to be the name given to the General Cultural Officer, or to one of his subordinates in charge of the book service? Preferring to be General Cultural Officers (to this extent at least), the conference logically proceeded to argue that since they were not concerned solely with *loanable* material, facilities should be provided on the premises for using recorded knowledge which could not readily be taken to members' homes—hence library film shows and record recitals.

Exhibitions outside the library—in shops or cinema foyers, or as part of larger local shows and exhibitions—were considered to have considerable value in getting the library service accepted and understood in the community, but noticeable immediate results should not be expected; the effect would be cumulative over many years. Book weeks, however, were generally held to have little publicity value, and to be not worth the great amount of work involved.

The question, whether the librarian should seek or accept the rôle of cultural leader in the community—beyond the extent referred to above—with all that that involves in the organizing of local societies and other activities, was really at the heart of this session. It was agreed that the answer must vary with local conditions; that the local authority's "6d. rate for culture" which could be levied under the 1948 Local Govern-

ment Act could best be administered by a specially appointed officer on the librarian's staff; and that the librarian's function should be to encourage, co-ordinate, and provide facilities for local group activities, but not actually to organize them himself. Details were given of the various ways in which this is done at Leyton, Dudley and Swindon.

Direct organization by the library staff was, however, considered legitimate in the case of children's activities, and story-hours, stamp clubs and play-readings were cited as examples of valuable services which could be considered to be within the province of the children's librarian.

PRINTED PUBLICITY

Four main types of printed publicity were considered:—

1. Introductions to the library service.
2. Annual reports.
3. Bulletins.
4. Book lists.

Annual reports were discussed with scarcely a kind word. The librarian's report to his committee was not considered to be a suitable piece of publicity outside the committee; typographically it should be comparable with the council minutes. Beyond this, an occasional press hand-out was felt to be just as useful as any ostentatious report. A minority felt that a small "popular" folder might be produced for distribution to the public, or that a five-yearly report might have some value for this purpose.

Bulletins (being usually lists of additions together with articles of local or literary interest) were likewise considered to be not worth the trouble of printing them. But the conference was strongly in favour of both subject lists and periodic lists of new additions—numerous examples were quoted of the use made of these lists by readers, who apparently find that a file of them performs some of the functions of a printed catalogue.

Most discussion centred round the provision of an introduction to the library service, which emerges from this conference as The Most Desirable Piece of Library Printed Publicity. Four functions of such an introduction were considered.

1. To be given to applicants for membership.
2. To be distributed to non-members following a talk to a local society or at other "extra-mural" events.
3. To be distributed to new residents.
4. To be distributed to school leavers, or to school classes after a visit to the library.

After lengthy discussion in all four syndicates the consensus of opinion was that two introductions were necessary:—

1. In general terms, to be given to non-members, containing a general statement of the services available together with the addresses of local libraries and the hours of opening.
2. A detailed guide to the use of the libraries to be given to new members.

It was resolved in general session:

7. That the A.A.L. Council should consider asking the L.A. to produce a model general introduction to the public library service for the guidance of individual local authorities.

NATIONAL PUBLICITY

The first point made in the discussion of this subject was that our prime need *as a profession* was for good *public relations*; nevertheless, there was a need for a national publicity campaign for libraries, in spite of the many bad public library systems which might be embarrassed by such a campaign. (Their embarrassment was in fact regarded as not the least of the objects of such a campaign which, if skilfully directed, could result in local agitation for their improvement).

The conference overwhelmingly supported the view that to achieve both these ends it was urgently necessary that a Public Relations Officer should be appointed by the Library Association. After careful consideration of the possibility of carrying out the proposed duties with the existing staff, it was resolved in general session:—

8. **That the Library Association should be asked to consider appointing a professional Public Relations Officer, and that this conference would support an increase in subscriptions for this purpose should it not be possible to finance such a project in any other way.**

National publicity was then considered by the syndicates in some detail. It was accepted that the money was not available for a high pressure short-term campaign which would have lasting effects, and that the process must rather be continual and slow, using local resources to the full. The first aim should be to enlist the support of influential individuals and groups in local communities, whose co-operation could ensure the success of subsequent publicity. This should be directed towards improving backward systems and increasing the *quality of use* in all libraries. The general campaign should be supplemented by a number of smaller campaigns aimed at special groups (e.g., industry, teachers).

Various ways of financing library publicity were considered, and it was agreed that the cost could legitimately be a charge on the income of the L.A.—i.e., on the subscriptions of members. Though the immediate aim was to improve local services and thus benefit institutional members, nevertheless all librarians stood ultimately to gain from the increased prestige which the profession would acquire. It was not considered practicable to ask for a special government grant for the purpose of *publicity*, but one outcome of a successful publicity campaign might well be government support for *libraries*. Some advantage was to be gained from co-operation with publishers and booksellers in a joint campaign to publicize *books*.

Neither here nor in the session on display was there support for the idea that posters and other display material should be produced nationally; this was expected to be unnecessarily costly and to stifle local initiative.

EXHIBITION

A feature of this conference was the excellent display of libraries' publicity material, selected and mounted by G. W. Harris, of Battersea. It presented a cross-section, good bad and indifferent, of printed and duplicated material which provided an admirable background to the discussions. The final resolution of the general session was—

9. **That consideration should be given to presenting at Chaucer House a similar exhibition to the one shown at the conference.**

SUMMING UP

A notable innovation this year was the introduction of a non-librarian, Mr. Luscott Evans, the advertising expert, to give the opening address on Saturday morning. He introduced a breath of professional fresh air into what might have become a dilettante deliberation, and his shrewd observations were frequently quoted in subsequent sessions when the discussion appeared about to go off the rails.

This excellent introduction, and the exhibition already mentioned, contributed largely to the success of this outstandingly successful conference. The standard of discussion seemed to this observer to be higher than ever before, though it seemed also that the proportion of silent auditors was higher than has been customary. (These two conclusions may perhaps go hand in hand; our conferences must steer a middle way between the popular and the esoteric). The four discussion leaders, Messrs. E. F. Ferry, W. E. Tyler, J. F. Wakeman and A. Wilson, gave excellent guidance to the four groups into which the conference was divided, and have not been surpassed either in the quality of their leadership or in the adequacy of their preparation.

Local arrangements were in the hands of Miss A. H. Higgs and the committee of the Midland Division, who maintained the high standard we have come to expect on these occasions; the libraries of Birmingham welcomed us on Saturday afternoon, and the Coventry staff provided an amusing entertainment on the Friday evening.

As a social occasion also this conference has fulfilled our expectations. The Loughborough reunion announced in our March issue was in full swing when we looked in at 1.30 on Saturday morning; and unions and reunions were indeed fashionable whenever serious discussion flagged. Birmingham may claim to have taken us one step nearer to that early aim of our Association quoted last month by Mr. Sayers: to provide an assistant with friends in every library.

A. C. JONES.

TOO OLD AT THIRTY?

COUNCIL NOTES: MARCH 10

"THIS is the thin edge of the totalitarian wedge." A protest from one of Mr. Bevan's supporters? A *Daily Worker* screamer? Not either of these, but a soberly-delivered contribution to one of several lively debates at the March Council meeting.

A motion on this year's A.G.M. agenda was being considered. It seeks to amend the rules governing the election of National Councillors to ensure that three (half) of them shall be under thirty years of age. No voice was raised in protest against the Hon. Treasurer's bold assertion that there was only one person in the room under thirty, though Mr. Surridge indulged in a little make-believe preening, probably occasioned by nostalgia.

"As I cannot dye my hair grey, I declare my interest," said the Vice-President (Mr. Tynemouth), urging that the motion be declared contentious, so that it should be submitted to the whole Association and not decided on a "snap vote" at an A.G.M. An unidentified speaker (my co-reporters have not yet reached Hansard standards) suggested that soon it would be possible to get on the Council only if one were a woman, under thirty, and serving in a county library south of the Wash. Not all

the National Councillors were silent on this question. Miss Willson, ruled out of order, but not, one hopes, for revealing her age, threatened resignation if the motion was carried, while Mr. Carver suggested that the colour of a person's eyes, indicating brain potential according to some authorities, might be a more valid qualification than age, or lack of it. The usually lucid Mr. W. G. Smith informed us that on this item G.L.D. representatives had been instructed to vote for a free vote. General laughter, a plea from Mr. McColvin for sanity and sense of proportion, and Council itself did just that.

Consideration of a memorandum by the previous Honorary Secretary on the implications of a Municipal Libraries Section of the L.A. created further healthy argument, and brought forth a spate of motions, amendments and counter-amendments to test the constitutional knowledge and customary calm of the President. In the end Council decided to retain an open mind on the subject pending further developments. Mr. W. G. Smith was unhappy about what he called a "do-nothing" attitude and wanted special librarians to offer ASLIB in exchange for a Municipal Libraries Section.

Three of four divisional motions were concerned with salaries, and it was decided to ask the Library Association to take full responsibility for informing members when salaries of advertised posts are considered inadequate. The fourth motion voiced the disapproval by the East Midland Division of the style and tone of a memorandum by the Honorary Secretary on library legislation. The representative from Devon and Cornwall revealed that a similar view had been taken by his divisional committee, but Mr. Parsonage dismissed it all as "a storm in a teacup," while Mr. W. G. Smith expressed surprise that anything so pompous could emanate from assistants. The motion was defeated.

With such a large Council it is necessary that much of the work should be done in committees. Press and Publications had considered a memorandum by the Honorary Editor on the division of the duties carried out by this Officer. Next year the Hon. Editor will be responsible for the *Assistant Librarian* only, while an Honorary Publications Officer will be responsible for seeing through the press the Association's growing number of publications. Registration students who have learnt well their proof-correcting signs should note that the Council will need candidates for both these offices before 1956. (See page 81).

The Education Committee's report revealed that correspondence course students completing their courses had achieved a 67 per cent. pass in the December examinations, with $14\frac{1}{2}$ merits and $\frac{1}{2}$ an honour! A letter which had been received, criticising one of the courses, raised the issue, live since before *Areopagitica*, of the freedom of the press. The Hon. Editor had promised to publish it; the Education Committee recommended that it should not be published. The Editor's right to publish what he thought fit was defended . . . and supported.

The special committee set up to consider the future administration of correspondence courses and the distribution of publications (5,640 sold last year) recommended the continuance of the A.A.L. policy of having honorary officers while recognising that substantial paid help would be required for these duties. The finances of the new arrangement were approved, and four of the officers appointed to interview three of the sixteen candidates who had answered the Council's advertisement.

The Thesis Committee, set up as a result of a motion carried at last year's A.G.M., presented a recommendation that a post-Finals thesis be

introduced to encourage research by Fellows of the Association, the work to be rewarded by "some form of Honours Diploma." A recommendation to this effect has been forwarded to the Library Association Council. The committee set up to formulate a policy for the A.A.L. reported progress. One of the recommendations was that the Diamond Jubilee issue of the *Assistant* should be devoted to the consideration of A.A.L. policy.

Finance and General Purposes Committee regretted that they had been unable to increase capitation payments to Divisions, and once again the inadequacy of the capitation received from the L.A., unchanged since the 1929 agreement, was underlined. Progress on the A.A.L.'s new film was reported: it is now apparently completed and edited, but not "married." This provoked the comment that it might have an X certificate. Council will have a private preview at their next meeting, and it is hoped to have a press showing together with "Index to Progress" shortly after. Negotiations are in hand for a TV. performance, and Mr. Bristow may have the opportunity to prove himself the first photogenic President.

The Council concluded with some able and incredibly detailed reporting of the L.A. Council business by the President. Shorthand or an unusually portable secretary must be among his assets.

In conclusion, thanks are due to those who have helped me to report some of the above items in such detail, with names, dialogue, etc. They shall be nameless—for their own safety at the next meeting.

ERIC MOON.

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR BINDING

FICTION

In Full Rexine with new reinforced unsewn binding our "Standard Fiction Binding" is the most economic in the country.

JUVENILE "FLATS"

We can solve the problems of this class of work with an almost unbreakable binding that has been proved in Libraries, and that we have evolved for all flat ephemeral work at a reasonable price.

NON FICTION AND MUSIC

A rexine spine with waterproof cloth plus a new and greatly improved joint will give hard and long wear to all volumes at a very moderate range of prices.

We will be very happy to rebind any volumes published in any unsewn binding other than spiral bindings.

We must emphasise that we guarantee all work undertaken by us in any process against fair wear and tear and Library usage

ALL ENQUIRIES WELCOME AT
BENLOCK LIMITED

SOUTH BANK · MIDDLESBROUGH · YORKS.

“NOT TO HAVE READ MIDDLEMARCH”

by PEGGY FRANSELLA, *Senior Assistant, East Holborn Br. L.*

TURNING FROM the back page to the middle page of the T.L.S. one day in 1947, I was horrified to see these words: “Not to have read *Middlemarch* is a sign of intellectual poverty.” What was the use of a Grade I job if one knew oneself for an intellectual pauper? Needless to say our copy of *Middlemarch* was “not available,” but I managed to get a battered copy from the basement of another branch and with it restored my self-respect.

This was by no means the first or last time in my career that I have been appalled at the gaps in my reading. I arrived at Hammersmith in 1943 from the depths of the country with little or no knowledge of modern literature, although I was pretty well up in the pre-Shakespearean dramatists and Books II and III of the *Golden Treasury*. Such modern novels as I had read were a very odd selection either chosen for my mother by the local Boots or borrowed from equally indiscriminating friends at school. Fortunately my fellow library assistants were rather better-read than I, and they hastened to recommend their favourite authors to me. I read madly, spurred on by such remarks as “But you simply haven’t lived if you haven’t read . . .” Constant shelving, straightening and checking of reserves gave me a working knowledge of authors and titles and, one way and another, I soon acquired enough to be dangerous. I gaily recommended *The Waves* to a German lady who read English with only moderate ease, because I knew Virginia Woolf was “good.”

My peace of mind was again disturbed when I started classes for the Elementary Exam. which then contained a very valuable Literature paper. My Fifth and Sixth Form work had given me a detailed knowledge of certain small sections of English Literature, but it had left vast unexplored territories. Although my fellow juniors had done their best to remedy my ignorance, I found many new names in the list of modern novelists given us by our tutor and I got down to the job of reading at least one book by each.

I am annually depressed by the lists of “best novels,” that the reviewers provide in the Sunday papers. I never seem to have read more than three or four and they produce a crop of scrap cards headed “Please reserve for P. Fransella.” By about June I catch up!

It is curious how everyone else at the Library is so much better-read than I am. A Staff Guild talk on the American novel by quite a newcomer to librarianship sent me scurrying to the shelves to borrow at least something by Faulkner. I was always dimly ashamed that I had not read *Madame Bovary*, but another Guild talk galvanized me into action last summer. I was forced to read Carson McCullers’s *Reflections in a golden eye* by the insistence of a kindly junior who offered it to me every time it was returned.

If the endeavours of the staff to improve my mind become irksome I can at least rebel, but recommendations from readers cannot be ignored if the library’s goodwill is to be maintained; and our readers seem just as anxious to give me advice as to ask for it. Reading *Middlemarch* may have saved me from the intellectual bread-line, but even a modest competence still seems a long way off. If ever achieved it will at least be free of income tax!

✓ OUR LIBRARY SCHOOLS

by W. B. PATON, *Chairman, L.A. Education Committee*

IN HIS CONTRIBUTION ON OUR LIBRARY SCHOOLS in the March number of *The Assistant Librarian*, Thomas Clearwater belies his name. The bricks he has cast into the pond have muddied the waters and seriously impaired his clarity of vision, a process completed by fistfuls of dust recklessly scattered in the wake of the bricks for good measure. In case Thomas Clearwater has succeeded in misleading his readers as completely as he has bemused himself, it is necessary to challenge many of his assertions. His mis-statements or exaggerations include the following:—"We are sure that this renewed and widespread interest . . . is some evidence that serious problems are arising." If anyone receives from this an impression that the schools are heading for trouble or that crisis looms ahead (a not unwarranted interpretation of the phrase "serious problems"), then I am happy to give an unqualified assurance that there are no grounds whatever for such a suggestion. It may be, as Thomas Clearwater avers, that "in some sectors of the profession there is a good deal of feeling . . . about the schools," and that "from students and chief librarians . . . much criticism arises." If so, I have encountered neither, and I am as closely in touch with both branches of the profession, I imagine, as is Thomas himself. My experience convinces me that in the main the students are well satisfied with the services provided by the schools, and as a Chief Librarian who has benefited greatly from the employment of assistants trained in a library school (one of Thomas Clearwater's "secondary consumers"), I strongly refute his allegation of criticism. It is true that recently, in respect of one small school inadequately staffed, complaint has been received of inefficiency in organisation, but that relates to 17 students out of a total of several hundreds throughout the country, and gives no warrant whatever for the sweeping generalisations of T.C.

In matters of fact, Thomas Clearwater errs in ways that betray his limited knowledge of the overall situation in the schools, however relevant his statements may be in individual cases. For instance, it is a gross exaggeration that "a great deal of the teaching at full-time schools . . . is done by visiting lecturers." Insult is added to injury when these latter are superciliously dubbed as "minor deputy librarians, branch librarians, cataloguers and the like"—poor fish indeed! "The virtual non-existence of full-time Finals students" is hard to explain in a year when for the first time, full-time Final courses are functioning successfully in no less than *four* schools. Although I think that the Moderating Committees could be further improved and strengthened, I know from experience that they have already achieved valuable results, and must contradict the statement that the Moderating Committees have not yet become effective.

These serious inaccuracies of fact will no doubt weigh with readers in their judgment of Thomas Clearwater's sweeping statements on wider issues. He discerns a difference in "calibre" between those who teach in our schools, and those who administer our libraries, using as yard-stick, apparently, the sole criterion of administrative ability. It is indeed a naive assumption that because a man is a successful Chief Librarian, he is therefore a good teacher. In fact, the tendency may well be in the opposite direction, for the qualities required for effective lecturing need not coincide with those which bring success in executive duties. Whether the lecturers in our schools have been Chief Librarians or not is largely beside the point. What is important is that they are enthusiasts in their vital work, are willing to continue as students themselves, retain open minds, approach their task with vision, experiment with new ideas and

methods, and inspire interest and enthusiasm in their students. From personal knowledge, I consider that as a profession we are fortunate in the quality of the men and women who staff our library schools, and that the criticism they have received at the hands of Thomas Clearwater is quite unwarranted. On the general question of calibre, and as an effective answer to T.C.'s snobbish query, "The head of such and such a school—who is he, and what has he done?" it is worth noting that the Head of one of our schools topped the poll at a recent L.A. annual election, and another Head came second.

With the recent publication of the full list of examiners, the truth, or otherwise, of the statement that our examiners are in the main experienced Chief Librarians and elder statesmen, can be judged by readers themselves. At least fifty per cent. of examiners up to Registration standard belong to the despised categories of "minor deputy librarians, branch librarians, cataloguers and the like."

The tacit assumption throughout Clearwater's article that our library schools are failing to measure up to modern requirements, and are poorly regarded by the profession; his description of them as in danger of becoming "mere appendages of our professional education and life, liable to lose the broad support of librarians," and his statement that "the student is One Down to begin with" are most effectively refuted by the following fact:—At the June, 1954, examination, two-thirds of all the students who completed the Registration examination attended a course at a full-time School of Librarianship. HOW NOW, THOMAS?

This journal and this Association have always welcomed forthright and constructive criticism, and although adequate machinery exists for the investigation of complaints by correspondence course students (mentioned by the Hon. Education Secretary below), the following letter is published in the hope that it will be seen as an invitation to all members to give voice to their criticisms and suggestions regarding any aspect of the Association's work.

A STUDENT WRITES :

Now that Mrs. Firth [January Assistant] has started the hare of correspondence courses, can I follow it up with some thoughts that occurred to me during a course I took last year? I must confess that the course gave me a far better coverage of the syllabus than I had realised at the time. It had not, however, given me any confidence.

Let me start with the timing of the ten monthly lessons. The first set of answers was due back on the 30th May, and thereafter a set was due on the 30th of each month up to Lesson 10 due back on 28th February. There was no break during the summer, so that when I went on holiday a month's course had to be completed in a fortnight. In any case, there is scarcely time to adequately cover the material and write six answers in a month. I would suggest that instead of the student being left on his own for four months between answering his last lesson and facing the examiners, six weeks would be a more suitable period for revision, and the remaining weeks be spread over the year, allowing more time for each lesson.

The introductory notes warned me that "the syllabus for the examination in historical bibliography is so wide that lessons can only serve as a guide to what must be read and learnt." It gave no definition of

"historical bibliography" nor attempted to explain its importance to me as a librarian. The "Outline of course" didn't come until I received the last set of lesson papers.

The masterpiece of the course was the list of "Basic text books"—over 100 of them, in alphabetical order of authors, which Esdaile calls "mere intellectual laziness or want of imagination." Surely on a topic which is part of our own professional knowledge it is possible to produce something more useful. It is true that the "most important" books were marked with an asterisk, though the standard of importance seems to have been rather an odd one. *The story of maps*, by L. A. Brown, to which there was one reference (pp. 150-179), had an asterisk, but not so G. D. Hobson's *Maioli, Canevari and others*. Indeed, there was no book on bindings among the "most important" and no book on papermaking in the list at all. Curwen's *Processes of graphic reproduction* was in the list of text-books but no readings were given from it.

"A word of warning about titles—do try to remember them exactly," said the introductory notes. Would that the compiler had remembered his own precept. He would certainly not have passed "Advanced Cat. and Class." with his variations between "RICCI, S. de" and "De Ricci," and between "DAVIES, B. N. L." and "Langdon-Davies." Then there was a reading, "Gray, *A note on music engraving and printing*" with no author's initials or date of publication.

When Binns was added to the list, someone went to the trouble of giving page-references from it to each group of readings. Yet at the end of lesson 4, on modern printing methods, the readings consisted of four complete books, one in six volumes and another in two, and added for good measure "and any other handbooks of general printing practice which may be available to you !

Perhaps the chief objection to the lists of readings was the infuriating way in which parallel readings from a number of general histories were given (of which one would have been sufficient) while the really useful material was often buried in "supplementary readings." The student's time was thus wasted by repetition of secondary material.

In September, Mrs. Martin sent me the Education Committee's apologies for the errors I had noted (in lesson four). Her letter concluded (my italics): "*As soon as they are noticed* a corrections sheet is issued with the course." The three foolscap pages of "Corrections and Additions" were dated January—and managed to include a few minor errors of their own. Many of the errors could have been spotted easily, but that is scarcely an excuse for them. The lesson on binding had suffered badly, with wrong members of families or binders receiving the honours. Certainly as far as I was concerned the most annoying of the errors were the incorrect references to periodical articles. My nearest large reference library is unfortunately closed-access so that the staff had to trot forwards and backwards finding the right issues for me. The reference to an article on a William Pickering was correct except that it referred not to the nineteenth-century publisher of that name whom I was then studying but to the first book-seller on London Bridge. While I know that this is a standard course, surely the tutors have copies; yet mine asked to what reading I referred when I mentioned this Pickering article. She is also under the impression that the Monotype Corporation issued the Gill "Pilgrim" type!

So far, I have been criticising. I am prepared to believe that this was an exceptionally bad course, but the fact remains that the Association published it. I would, however, like to make some suggestions.

Firstly, the list of text-books. As it stands it is useless. I can see

the point of an alphabetical list of all the books from which readings are to be given, if the list gives full enough bibliographical information for quick consultation of library catalogues; the readings can then be given either by the author's name or an abbreviated title. It would probably be more expedient, however, to give such bibliographical information in a list more usefully arranged.

My list would start with the very small number of books which the student will want by him continually; in this case, say Esdaile, Binns and McKerrow. Then, arranged by lessons or groups of lessons, would come the books the student will need during parts of the course; Updike, for example, during the lessons on printing. My list would try to differentiate between the books the student should usefully have at his elbow and those from which his consultations could as easily be made in a reference library. There will probably be students whose lack of reference facilities will negative the chief value of this, though it would indicate which books would be most usefully borrowed. The list should also, I think, show the readings from parallel general studies as alternatives, to be read if time allows.

If this list of books as required lesson-by-lesson were sent out at the start of the course the student would be in a much better position to assemble the material he required in time for his wanting it. And could not the stencils be independently checked for references before being run off?

For the lesson notes, they could surely provide a more useful resumé of essential facts (and better presented) as a starting-point for, and guide to, the student's further reading.

COLSTON M. HARTLEY,
Senior Assistant, West Riding C.L.

[The Hon. Education Secretary replies :—

The Education Committee greatly regrets that there has been cause for complaint in respect of this particular correspondence course. Since their introduction after the war, standard courses for no less than seventeen sections of the syllabus have been produced and are being maintained. This is no inconsiderable task and means a great deal of hard and tedious work for a number of already busy librarians. The compilers are, of course, fully qualified and the editors acknowledged experts in their particular subjects. It follows, therefore, that it is unlikely that any course is "an exceptionally bad course." (Of the eight students who sat the June and December, 1954, examinations after taking the Final, Part 4 (d) course, seven were successful, two with merit). The course in question, in any case a difficult one comprising 71 stencils, represented a great deal of effort and time by both compiler and editor. New editions of courses are normally issued every two years, unless the requirements of the syllabus demand otherwise, when improvements in their presentation are incorporated. During the interim period, amendments and additions sheets are added to keep the notes and readings up to date. It is hoped that the method, adopted this year, of listing recommended textbooks lesson by lesson will prove more useful to students.

It will be appreciated that the majority of members of the tutoring panel are already engaged in full-time jobs, but are willing to co-operate in the work of helping, to the best of their ability, those colleagues in the profession who wish for guidance in their attempts to pass the examinations. Full instructions are issued by the Education Committee to tutors as to the conduct of the courses, and one of these is that the course should be spread over the specified session, allowing for holiday and revision periods. In the Instructions to Students, issued as part of the course, students are asked to send any com-

ments, complaints, recommendations, etc., to the Hon. Education Secretary, who will place them before the Committee for consideration and investigation. This is the only way in which the Committee can keep in touch with the students in a method of tuition where close contact is difficult. All students are asked to co-operate in this way, thus doing their part in helping to effect as efficient a service as is humanly possible in the circumstances in which the courses are offered at as low a cost as possible.]

OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

(including a number of letters unavoidably held over from April).

JUNIOR ASSISTANTS

Some points from letters received in response to the article in our February issue.

Miss Wilden-Hart spoils her latest shrewd contribution to this journal by the inclusion of these revolting terms: 1, Counter hands; 2, Immature sub-professionals; 3, Mature sub-professionals . . .

May I substitute: 1, Clerical, yes, just Clerical, assistants; 2, Professional trainees; after which I believe one just becomes a Chartered Librarian? At what precise point in training would Miss Wilden-Hart draw a *general* distinction between professional immaturity and professional maturity, in order to establish the separate posts she suggests? As she rightly says, "the staff . . . are first and foremost individuals."

P. J. BANKS,
Assistant, Chiswick P.L.

At present salaries the public library has little to offer the intelligent clerical worker who would be required to operate the administrative branch of librarianship efficiently. The typist, filing clerk or counter hand can command a salary higher than local authorities are prepared to offer assistant librarians . . .

We are all familiar with the fact that the younger members of the staff, among whom the majority of clerical tasks are now allocated, frequently spend longer over a job than its importance merits. A similar mistake could not be tolerated in a full-trained clerical worker, who must therefore possess an intelligence and ability no less than that of the librarian. . . .

Would it be too much to suggest that we advocate paying the counter hand and clerk considerably more than the general assistant, to ensure an efficient library system, able to do its job and to train its recruits?

P. C. F. SAMPSON,
Royal Air Force.

It is a pity that Miss Wilden-Hart has allowed her determination to be outspoken at all costs to obscure, if for a moment, her judgment. In her article in your February issue she has this aside: "(in point of fact many graduates are professionally very immature)." I can see no sound reason whatever for this remark. Graduates are professionally immature when they enter the profession; but so, surely, is every other new entrant, and it is no cause for criticism. She cannot mean that graduates *remain* immature, for she says herself (*Record*, March, 1954, p. 100) that "it is the experience they receive at the university that, makes their minds mature," and a mature mind can easily assimilate the "techniques and methods which are the main concern of the librarian at this level." If your readers will look at the article and delete this aside, they will see that Miss Wilden-Hart's argument is not in the least affected.

D. J. FOSKETT,
Information Officer, Metal Box Co., Ltd.

Miss Wilden-Hart states that "as in commerce, so in libraries assistants should know that the customer is never mistaken, though in extreme cases he may make pardonable errors"! I wonder why? Surely there is a world of difference between a

public library and a grocer's shop, both in theory and in fact?

The library is a public service paid for by the reader, whether he wants it or not. If he is dissatisfied, he can legitimately complain and something may be done to obviate the ground of his complaint. If he is definitely infringing a rule or refusing to obey one, he must be amenable or get out. If he considers a rule, whether bye-law or regulation, unjust he is at liberty to campaign against it—he must, however, continue to abide by it if he wishes to remain a reader until or unless it is repealed or amended (as in the case of fines).

All readers are entitled to courtesy, some even require sympathy: demanding, selfish types are emphatically not if they behave abominably in the library. Self-abasement before such a person might have become a slave in Augustus' public library at Rome: it does *not* become an allegedly professional librarian of to-day.

J. M. D. CROSSEY,
Assistant, Belfast P.L.

CATALOGUING RULES

Mr. Sharp's and Miss Winter's contributions to the above correspondence would seem to require some further comment from me.

Miss Winter asks me why I scouted the idea, advanced by Miss Morton in initiating this correspondence, of A.A.L. Divisions forming Revision committees for cataloguing rules. I should have thought the futility of *more* committees for this purpose would have been self-evident. Surely, what is wanted is one or two *individuals* with the necessary drive to get something done.

Mr. Sharp is of course, perfectly right in castigating Miss Morton for her reference to "pettifogging rules." In cataloguing, it is not the average, straightforward book or heading which causes difficulty, but the oddity for which we must have explicit rules if inconsistency is to be avoided. It is surprising how often one needs these so-called "pettifogging" rules.

I did not expect Mr. Sharp to like

my references to L.A. apathy on cataloguing code revision, but in my opinion his reply in no way invalidates my contentions. I was aware of the reference to the British Committee in *A.L.A. Cataloging Rules*, 1949, but, placed at the end of the preface, is it not rather a colourless and formal footnote? The British Committee were evidently "informed." What proof is there that they were consulted or that "general agreement [was] assured?" Even if the 1941 preliminary edition profited by British suggestions, these were surely largely negated by the through-going changes of 1949, on which no word of British co-operation is admitted.

Does Mr. Sharp in his statement that the Cataloguing Rules Sub-Committee has met monthly since May, 1951, imply that it took six years from the end of the war for this Sub-Committee to be reconstituted? If so, my charge of dilatoriness seems amply justified. His question whether Cutter on subject cataloguing (after fifty years!) can be bettered hardly argues a constructive attitude on the part of the Sub-Committee. Margaret Mann, Sears, Frick and other exponents of modern practice do not exactly see eye to eye with Cutter on place v. topic headings, for instance.

The few sessions of the Inquiry on Cataloguing Principles and Practice which I attended disappointed me. As a practising librarian, convinced by experience of the value to the public of a properly constructed dictionary catalogue, I offered a contribution to the Inquiry, based on the practice of this not untypical library. I had no acknowledgment of the offer and I came away from the sessions sadder but no wiser.

E. O. REED,
Borough Librarian, Chelmsford.

As another student struggling to master the A-A Code rules, I entirely agree with Miss Morton. And at the risk of sounding naïve, I should like to say that one would scarcely term the taking of four years to revise a part of the Code, progression. Miss

Morton's suggestion, which is as Miss Winter said, a sound constructive criticism and not merely a complaint, however justified, might help to make this "progression" a little sharper.

MISS C. CUERDEN,
*Student, Manchester School of
Librarianship.*

I was most interested to read Mr. Sharp's letter on cataloguing in the March issue, and I can well understand his irritation. However, I feel that the situation which led to this correspondence does suggest that there is a lack of contact between Chaucer House and the members at large. The dry statement that "the Sub-Committee met x times during the year and considered y rules" is no satisfaction for those who are interested and want to know what is going on. A recent letter to the *Record* recalling the fate of the committee which did a lot of work on cataloguing of gramophone records cannot have made members feel any happier.

Why is there such reticence to let us know what ideas are being put forward? Certainly I concede that it would be inadvisable to publish the British provisional decisions *as such*, but is there any harm in publishing them (and important minority proposals) for information, discussion and comment? There is a most extraordinary difference between the British and the American attitudes to this question. Here, apparently, the sub-committee is keeping very quiet until it is ready to spring the whole set of proposals on us at once; in America, each individual question is liable to be much discussed in the professional press, especially in the *Journal of Cataloging and Classification*. Rival rules are set side by side and comments are encouraged. In a recent issue of the *Journal of Cataloging and Classification* there was even an appeal from the American committee for cataloguers and library schools to make their own "case studies" of rules which they consider need revision, and to send the results to the Committee.*

I would like to ask a fundamental question, which I hope Mr. Sharp will

be kind enough to answer. What is the basis on which the sub-committee is working? Is it discussing the existing rules one by one, or is it reviewing the whole structure of the Code, perhaps along the lines suggested by Lubetzky?—and if not, why not? That is to say, can we expect merely a revision of the old code rules, or a completely new Code worked up from scratch from basic principles? While the British sub-committee keeps so quiet, the profession cannot know whether it will get the sort of Code which it wants (if it knows what it wants!) until it has got it. In the meantime there will doubtless continue to be attacks which annoy Mr. Sharp so much.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Sharp for all the work he has done throughout so many years for cataloguers and students, interpreting a Code for us which is *not* simple and which *does* contain some pettifogging rules. Let us hope that his career will be crowned with a Code which will be the admiration of the profession the world over.

A. G. CURWEN,
*Assistant, Westminster Central
Reference Library.*

*My letter was written before I received the March issue of the *Record* containing Mr. Sharp's appeal for help with anonymous and pseudonymous entries. I welcome this—and duly climb down a number of pegs!

CLASSIFICATION

*In reply to Mr. Coates' letter in the
March issue.*

My original review of Sayers' *Introduction* [November, 1954] was directed to the examination student and my reply to Mr. Coates in the January *Assistant* attempted to underline this fact, pointing out that the L.A. examiners had, rightly or wrongly, omitted the Colon scheme from the syllabus. May I assure Mr. Coates that I was by no means unhappy in defending my review which, incidentally, Mr. Sayers himself has considered a "fair

and discriminating one." It would appear that Mr. Coates is easily disturbed; even without a preliminary waving of the proverbial red, white, blue or other coloured rag, he is so incensed that he must rush into the ring in order to condemn the traditional methods of training and plead for a more "coherent and constructive approach" in the use of a book scheme whose fundamental principles, in theory and in practice, were fixed very many years ago.

His fervent and ardent recommendation of this approach is no doubt coloured, however unconsciously, by his day to day routine duties far removed from the sceptic world. It is this type of theoretical mumbo-jumbo which he enunciates so pontifically, which conceals in a "froth of mystique," the essential practical nature of a book classification. I cannot believe that classifiers, past and present, famous and infamous, have all possessed to so great a degree the faculty of intuition to which Mr. Coates attributes their puny efforts to produce practical numbers.

To summarize, may I suggest that tutors and students would be well advised to ignore the intellectual exercises of Ranganathan and B.N.B. when preparing for the Registration Examination. By so doing, they may help in retaining a certain clarity in a subject which seems to attract the enthusiastic but so often involved and misguided theoretician.

C. W. TAYLOR,
*Central Lending Librarian,
Sheffield P.L.*

[This correspondence is now closed.—
Hon Ed.]

MEETINGS

As Mr. Chapman [in the March issue] insists that I have skated round his argument, here is my direct answer to his question. The staff guild may subsidise a junior (not necessarily a teenager) because it is he or she who needs professional encouragement. The man who has embarked on marriage, children and a mortgage has indeed demonstrated professional en-

thusiasm in undertaking these commitments on an assistant librarian's salary. I do not mean to imply that a staff guild should not subsidise married men; I only suggested that at an *assistants'* conference junior staff should be better represented. At the A.A.L. conferences that I have attended the married men have greatly outnumbered the junior assistants, both male and female.

JEAN BINDER,
Reference Librarian, St. Albans P.L.

It may be of interest to your members to know that the Manchester Public Libraries Staff Association is paying two-thirds of the expenses of one of its younger members in order that she can attend the Sixth Annual Week-end Conference at Birmingham. This is a direct result of Miss Binder's letter in your August, 1954 number.

EDNA M. WOOD,
*Chairman, Education Sub-Committee,
Manchester P.L. Staff Association.*

INDEXES

The suggestion for an index to books of a discursive nature [April Editorial] is admirable, but since we have no English H. W. Wilson firm to prepare such an index for us, I fear the proposal is likely to remain just another good idea. The B.N.B. idea is suggested as one of three possible approaches to the problem. In the good old days before the B.N.B. came along and took some of our cataloguing from us, it was the pleasant task of the cataloguer to determine the subject of a book for himself. In many cases it was necessary to dip into the book and perhaps skim through many a section before coming to a decision. It was surprising how much general information was gleaned about the contents of the books being catalogued. Short of reading them all, there is no surer way of getting to know books than having to catalogue them. There is much talk these days of releasing professionals from non-professional duties and the B.N.B. has been hailed as one way of doing this, the cataloguing being left to the typist! Fortunately for our know-

THE THURLOE SERIES

*of special library
editions——ideal
for travelling
libraries*

Arts and Crafts
Cycling Tourist Guides
Electrical
Engineering
Gardening
Pets and Livestock
Modelling, etc.
Modelling, Railways
Photography
Wireless and
Television
Juveniles and
Elementary Readers

*Catalogues and Samples on
request*

OPPENHEIM & Co. Ltd.

*Library and Wholesale
Booksellers*

25, THURLOE STREET,
SOUTH KENSINGTON,
LONDON, S.W.7.

Telephone :
Kensington 6807 & 9431

THE HOLT-JACKSON BOOK COMPANY LIMITED



*Public and County
Library Booksellers*



MONTAUBAN
CHAMBERS,
ST. ANNES-ON-SEA,
LANCS.

Telephone: St. Annes 575



London Showroom:
13, BRITTON STREET,
CLERKENWELL ROAD, E.C.1
Telephone: Clerkenwell 3250.

ledge of books it is still the practice in some libraries to use the B.N.B. only as an occasional reference tool. Although our catalogues remind us of the books we have in stock, more often it is a knowledge of their insides that is needed to answer an enquiry.

Yet we cannot rely solely upon our memories, even in the smaller library. An index to the contents of 50 books a week would be a welcome help. (Of course the disadvantage in any such index lies in not having the books in stock which have been indexed). But any aid, however imperfect, leads us one step nearer that unattainable goal, which perhaps is our only excuse for calling ourselves a profession, of a thorough knowledge of our books and their contents.

A. CHAPMAN,
Chief Assistant,
Newcastle-under-Lyme P.L.

WELCOME WAGON

I hesitate to dampen the enthusiasm (or is it sarcasm?) of Miss (?) A. D. Mortimore¹, who has so recently been

"completely converted . . . to the American approach to Librarianship," as recorded in the March issue of your fascinating² publication.

Welcome-wagon hostesses are neither librarians nor library employees, however. They are attractive women who work (usually part-time) as "greeters" for those commercial enterprises willing to pay for this form of personal publicity. Dairies, grocers, dry cleaners, shoemakers, hairdressers and similar business establishments pay her for visiting newcomers and leaving samples of. "special-rate" coupons in order to encourage newcomers to use their "friendly" services in preference to those of their competitors. These charming ladies really do splendid work, but the inclusion of library registration cards along with commercial welcoming literature does not make them librarians—even in the broadest sense of this abused word.

ERIK J. SPICER,

Deputy Librarian, Ottawa P.L.

1. Sic. [Hon. Ed.]

2. Sic. [Hon. Ed.]

Berkshire Bookbinding Co., Ltd.

(Directors J. E. Cook and P. E. Cook)

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS

NON-FICTION AND
REFERENCE BINDINGS
ARE OUR SPECIALITY

27, ELDON TERRACE
READING, BERKS.

Telephone: Reading 60688.

8 miles by 7

is the service area of the
Clackmannan County Library at
Alloa.

"KEESING'S is well used here,
both by Public and Staff"
(writes the Librarian)

which proves the local interest
in Current Affairs and speaks
well of KEESING'S, the 'living'
documentation of present-day
developments.

CRAMERS for MUSIC

MUSICAL LITERATURE
AND MUSIC BINDING

139, New Bond Street
London, W.1

★ Special Music Enquiry Bureau

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 48. No. 6

JUNE, 1955

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

by J. S. BRISTOW, F.L.A.

Mr. Bristow's Diamond Jubilee Year address first reviewed the history of the A.A.L., and then went on to consider the problem of the future. It is unfortunately impossible to print the address here in its entirety, and rather than try to produce a potted version giving the gist of the whole we have elected to present, with but one or two minor omissions, the whole of the second part, which contains some of the most stimulating suggestions which have yet been put forward for the possible future policy of this Association and its relations with the L.A.

Although it was the President's privilege to "talk without being answered back" at the Annual General Meeting, he shares our hope that publication of this part of his paper will provoke further discussion of these matters in the pages of the "Assistant Librarian."

IT IS THE TIDY, methodical, classifying mind that sees in the present arrangement of Branches and Sections cross-classification, and wishes to dissolve the A.A.L. Perhaps from this viewpoint the A.A.L. is a nuisance. Financially we cost the L.A. about £2,000 per annum at present. Would not our 6,000 members join other sections and so increase their capitation payments by the same amount? What if we are to be replaced by a Municipal Libraries Section?

The greatest achievement of the A.A.L. has been to realise what the membership and profession need and to fulfil that need. The L.A., learning from the experience of the A.A.L. has now copied, and by duplicating the A.A.L. activities claims that there is now no need for us—that we are superfluous. *Your Association is in danger!* The Hutchings 5th-column attack in Yorkshire is an effort to break the divisions one by one. The A.A.L. has proved its solidarity from time to time, as I have already displayed by the results of the various elections.

During the last year Mr. Hutchings explained to the Yorkshire Division how the A.A.L. had fulfilled its purpose, and that, because the L.A. had learned the lessons the A.A.L. had given it, there was no longer any need for a tutor. The correspondence courses, he claims, could be run equally well by the L.A., as they were from 1904 to 1929. I agree, they possibly could, but would they be run for the same fees? Present opinion, however, is against the L.A. both teaching and examining, no doubt because the L.A. rightly wish to resist the claims of the Schools of Librarianship to conduct their own examination. The L.A. realises the danger of allowing differential values of the Registration Examination to develop.

The publishing that the A.A.L. does could also be done by the

L.A., he says, but an examination of the Publications Accounts of the L.A. compared with the Publications Accounts of the A.A.L. gives ample reason why they could not be managed equally well by the L.A.

We are accused of having no other function than that of reacting point by point to the actions of the L.A. It is asserted that this is our only policy, and that we cannot find any other policy under present conditions. We are living on past glories, and instead of being a forum for youngsters in the profession, the A.A.L. is a forum for those rising and over 40—an old guard, living in the past. I apologise for being an example of what he means, but the war took up six of my years on non-professional work, and that excuse applies equally well to my contemporaries. I think it not unreasonable for your President in normal times to have reached 30 by the time he wears this decorative badge.

Mr. Hutchings concluded his paper by saying that he had diagnosed the causes of death and had put forward, in fact, a prophetic post mortem. It reminded me of the centenarian who was advised by his doctor when 60 that he had only 3 months to live! As an Association we are 60 years old—we, too, may have a centenary.

The Yorkshire Division are perturbed by this attack. They are inclined to agree that the L.A. Branch is duplicating almost all the activities of the A.A.L., and that assistants are quite happy to attend the Branch Meetings, when they have the temerity to attack even their own chiefs. I can sympathise with the Yorkshire Division, as I had a similar experience in the Wessex Division in 1950. In the South-West there was keen activity in all three very live divisions—Devon and Cornwall, Bristol and District and Wessex, although the activities were crippled to a certain extent by lack of funds. The L.A. were anxious to have a branch covering this area, and they encouraged its formation. The A.A.L. could see no reason for the duplication of its work, but agreed to co-operate with the branch which was formed. The unfair part of this competition, if you like to call it such, between the divisions and the branch, is that the branch had at least three times the total funds of the three divisions, and I think I am right in saying that the branch hardly knew what to do with its capital.

The fault lies not in ourselves, but in the L.A., who have modelled their branch meetings on those of the divisions. To say that the A.A.L. is now redundant because the L.A. duplicates A.A.L. activities is like the 'bus company saying that the railway is redundant! *The A.A.L. can only be redundant when everything it does is done better and more economically by the L.A.*

George Roebuck, Honorary Secretary in 1906, said: "L.A.A. is an association of young men, run by young men for young men." Is it because the A.A.L. is no longer run by young men that it is in danger, that it is no longer in favour?

One way of deposing or persuading the older A.A.L. "statesmen" to leave your association to the young men, would be to offer the most outstanding ones seats on the L.A. Council and substantiate the offer by support in the elections.

I have said it in Council and I now say it publicly, that if the A.A.L. wishes it could nominate members for the 9 London, 15 County and 12 Branch Councillors, and having done that, it *could* be sure of securing their election. The A.A.L., by organisation, could secure at least 38 seats out of the Council of 60.

Are you so apathetic that you don't want to do this? Have you so few candidates, or are you too independent, resenting the suggestion

that you should vote thus and thus at a secret ballot? Are so few of you lacking in ambition to serve your colleagues and the profession? Perhaps you are all too busy becoming Chartered Librarians.

What does please me is that contentious matters on the Agenda of an L.A. A.G.M. rouse you once in a while to attend in numbers sufficient to get support from the Chief Librarians who still retain a warm regard for the A.A.L. and all it has done and still realise its value to the profession. On these occasions you show your strength.

Remember, the A.A.L. has 65 per cent. of the L.A. personal membership.

The infiltration process, or taking over of the A.A.L. activities by the L.A., you may feel is a good thing, and that we assistants have achieved the end for which we strove. In which case you may feel that the A.A.L. can lose its personality into the L.A.

If you feel this way and allow the A.A.L. to disappear as a section, you can be assured that you would have to organise yourselves well once again if you needed to become a fighting force—you would be back to 1895 once again.

I might mention here that a Scottish member of the L.A. said to me very recently that in Scotland the younger generation did not have a say in professional matters at all!

As things are at present it does not require much mobilisation then to resist any motions at the L.A. A.G.M., or to make proposals and have sufficient strength to ensure that the A.G.M. instructions are carried out. The present L.A. Council realise, I think, that at any time the tail could wag the dog—at present the tail limits its activities to pushing the dog along—usually, I hope, in the way it should go. As long as the A.A.L. action ceases there, as long as we do not over-reach ourselves, I think the L.A. are content on the surface to leave things as they are.

The point, however, is, are we content to let things follow this pattern and risk eventual dissolution through lack of interest and fighting spirit in the future? Remember, the profession is fast becoming feminised. We have only a small percentage of ladies on the Council. Is this only a slow development on the part of the fairer sex? In the future there will be fewer men in the profession and this is a challenge, I repeat, to all female members. Will they take a more active interest in library politics than they do at present?

I would now like to make some proposals for the future—criticising the L.A. constructively, I hope, as a counterblast to the destructive criticism the A.A.L. has received.

The L.A. is composed of authority and personal members. What does the L.A. do for its authority members, apart from giving them statistics which will cause them to spend more, or more wisely. It arranges Conferences which allow the Chief Librarians and their Committee Chairmen to have a holiday together. Many Committee Chairmen regard the meetings as a bore—some more conscientious ones regard the whole business as a waste of public money and time, but agree to sending delegates because they are reluctant to deprive the Chief Librarian of the opportunity of meeting his colleagues. As conferences most of them are failures, if I am to judge from the comments I hear. To my knowledge in recent years no resolutions have ever been made for action to be taken. This is possibly because, as a working conference, the attendance is too large. The Conference should be of more interest and appeal to the Authority members, most of whom should be

willing and able to take an active part in the proceedings. The G.L.D.'s draft policy (now some months old) for the Library Association, Section 1(e), says, "The Annual Conference requires better planning and management to allow of more informed discussion followed by recommendations for action. Regional Conferences could achieve greater success, especially if the same topics were chosen by each Region. One of the A.A.L. activities which the L.A. has not yet successfully copied, is the Weekend Conference, when a set theme is chosen and the delegates are arranged in working parties or syndicates.

There is no lengthy paper read by a speaker, followed by a few comments by the same hardy annual vocalists. Instead, syndicate leaders lead the discussion along certain lines and everyone is encouraged to make a contribution. The A.A.L. Conference aims to reach some definite conclusions. e.g. the Tighe Report was a result of the Manchester Conference and the May *Assistant Librarian* reported concrete proposals for action only three weeks after the Week-end Conference was held in Birmingham.

I mentioned earlier a mistake which I thought the L.A. had made in 1930, in declaring that only members of the Library Association could sit the L.A. examinations. At the Greater London Division Annual General Meeting earlier this year, I asked a provocative question. Why did special librarians join the Library Association? Miss Jepson of the War Office Library, kindly gave me an answer. It was that she wanted to sit the L.A. examinations—not that she felt the uniting of all persons interested in libraries was a good thing, although she may also agree to this, but she would resent not being able to join the L.A.—she wanted to be a Chartered Librarian. Why should she have to join the L.A. to sit their examinations?

All this goes back to the fact that the L.A. needed members in 1930 to gain the Carnegie Grant.

It is said that money is the root of all evil. Admittedly the L.A. was in a sorry financial state in 1930, but the same cannot be said to-day. Chaucer House is now paid for, and last year's statement of assets looks healthy. 1954 saw the balance on income over expenditure with our increased membership fees, and £3,000 have been invested as a result. I wonder now if the L.A. could exist satisfactorily without the membership of those of us who are not yet Chartered Librarians.

I would like to see the L.A. willing to examine for an economic fee anybody who was willing to present himself for the examination with that fee. So long as the L.A. has conscription of membership of all those persons who wish to be in the library profession, there are bound to be disagreements and lengthy discussions. The L.A., I venture to suggest, no longer needs a membership of upwards of ten thousand. I think that the assistant has now contributed what he was originally needed for, that is, the capital to encourage the Carnegie U.K. Trust to give at the time money towards this building of which we can well be proud. Surely now is the time for the L.A. to revert to its dignified position and to welcome to its membership only people to whom it is willing to grant Associateship or Fellowship, and Institutional memberships . . .

If, then, the L.A. can become independent without the A.A.L., what can the A.A.L. do on its own?

It can do exclusively all those things which it has done so well before the advent of the Branches. The Divisions would once again on their own organise meetings in their particular areas, but with this difference:—

At present the A.A.L. is run efficiently on 6s. a member. The Divisions find, however, that they could do much more if they had less worry over money. With a subscription of 10s. for those under 21 and £1 for those over 21, it is unlikely that the A.A.L. would have financial worries.

How much longer the A.A.L. can manage on 6s. a member remains to be seen. The Council have recently decided that the L.A. will not be embarrassed by a *request* for an increase on capitation.

This year will see the end of the connection of the Martins with the Correspondence Courses—this is a sad thing, but Sam Martin was Hon. Education Secretary in 1931, and Mrs. Martin carried on the work alone from 1942 through the war years, and again since Mr. Martin's elevation to the rank of Chief Librarian. It has been realised that the Martins are irreplaceable and that we must now reorganise the work of the Honorary Education Secretary on a financial basis, and we must also find accommodation for the standard courses, stationery, etc.

The ambitious publishing programme begun since the war by John Bryon and continued by Arthur Jones as Honorary Editors, has recently shown good financial results, but it has also brought its trail of problems. With a few titles in stock (notably PHILLIPS' *Primer of Classification*; HEWITT's *Summary of P.L. Law*; two Sayers pamphlets, etc.) the Martins tackled the distribution, etc., in addition to the Correspondence Courses, but with the publication of a new edition of *Sequels* they welcomed the time when a Publications Officer was appointed. Storage was a problem and we were grateful for the free use of a room in the premises of the Modern Book Co., in Praed Street, until Frank Cole found that distributing about a dozen titles was more than one person could cope with.

We are now fortunate in having the hospitality of the Newcastle Public Library, supported by a team of the library staff, but they find difficulty in coping with the volume of work in their spare time.

This arrangement which has proved very satisfactory for the Association, cannot go on indefinitely, and we are now considering renting premises for publications stock and standard correspondence courses.

An easy way out for a Council lacking in determination and courage would be to ask the L.A. to take over both the Correspondence Courses and the Publications—that might even be the wisest way out of the difficulties, but it would undoubtedly mean an increase in costs of the courses, and also in distribution costs. This would also mean that the A.A.L. would be one step closer to dissolution.

The present situation reveals only too well that the A.A.L. is large enough and strong enough to flourish as an independent body, and the present state of the L.A. shows that it is capable of a separate existence with a considerable reduction in membership. This might also mean a smaller council composed of equal numbers of authority members and Fellows. An organisation in which the authority members took greater part could probably make greater strides in co-operation than are at present possible through the efforts of *enthusiastic* Chief Librarians on their own.

There is surely more that the L.A. could do on the lines of the Joint Standing Committee of the Metropolitan Boroughs—co-operation, standardisation, subject specialisation, and more particularly a subject which has been under discussion by the L.A. Council quite recently, library legislation. New legislation would have more support if the authority members were fired with the enthusiasm of the librarians, and perhaps if there was more co-operation with the Authority organisations. More active authority members could with L.A. members formulate

national policy for libraries.

How many authority members attend Branch Meetings? We cannot expect them to listen to discussions and papers by assistants, but why should not branch meetings be attended by authority members and chiefs and Fellows, so that they could discuss things like co-operative purchase of books, organisation and methods investigations, library research, subject specialisation, co-operative cataloguing, complete mobilisation of area resources, co-operation with government and special libraries, public relations and library policy generally.

I would liken this to normal library committee work, in which the Library Committee decides broad lines of policy and leaves the Chief Librarian to carry it out. After the Chief Librarians and their authority members had hammered out policy, the A.A.L. at their meetings could well discuss how the various policies affected their work and how they might best be carried out.

If the Library Association would decide what is its business and then mind its own business and leave the A.A.L. to continue doing the work it has done (I venture to claim it has done very well, ever since its formation 60 years ago, there would be no declarations of our redundancy.

HOMO SAPIENS ?

Dr. Savage thinks the Association of Assistant Librarians is *functus officio*; we think so, too . . .

Editorial, *The Library World*, January, 1951.

The A.A.L. has acted as an energizing, educative and vigilant force of tremendous value and we hope will long continue its beneficent career.

Editorial, *The Library World*, March, 1955.

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR BINDING

FICTION

In Full Rexine with new reinforced unsewn binding our "Standard Fiction Binding" is the most economic in the country.

JUVENILE "FLATS"

We can solve the problems of this class of work with an almost unbreakable binding that has been proved in Libraries, and that we have evolved for all flat ephemeral work at a reasonable price.

NON FICTION AND MUSIC

A rexine spine with waterproof cloth plus a new and greatly improved joint will give hard and long wear to all volumes at a very moderate range of prices.

We will be very happy to rebind any volumes published in any unsewn binding other than spiral bindings.

We must emphasise that we guarantee all work undertaken by us in any process against fair wear and tear and Library usage

ALL ENQUIRIES WELCOME AT
BENLOCK LIMITED

SOUTH BANK · MIDDLESBROUGH · YORKS.

CHANGE OF HON. EDUCATION SECRETARY

As from June 1st, 1955, Mr. J. S. Davey, F.L.A., has been appointed as Hon. Education Secretary of the A.A.L. All enquiries regarding correspondence courses should now be addressed to him at 49, Halstead Gardens, London, N.21.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE FUTURE OF THE A.A.L.

The symposium on the future of the A.A.L. reminds me of the insecure child: "Mummy, what is to become of me?" "Mummy, am I really loved and wanted?" "Oh mummy, mummy why is everybody so nasty to me?" The simplest solution for a child's unhappiness is to chop off his head—a wasteful and messy procedure that might easily result in the execution of the executioner. An alternative solution is, presumably, to encourage the child to forget his fears and to give him such a background of trust and security that he will be able to lead a useful, happy and well-integrated existence. Children are, after all, the products of their parents and it ill becomes their parents to abuse them even if, as in this particular case, the union was effected at the point of a C.U.K.T. shotgun.

E. A. CLOUGH,
Deputy City Librarian, Bristol.

The main purpose of the A.A.L. is undoubtedly the welfare of the assistant. Are conditions in all libraries so perfect that there is no further need for improvement? Our own excellent Tighe report was bungled by the Library Association negotiations with NALGO to such an extent that no part of the report has been included in the "Blue Book."

For some subtle reason, Mr. Hutchings wishes us to hand over to the Library Association. First of all, we should have to be convinced of the desirability and necessity of such a transfer—neither of which is appar-

ent. Secondly, we should have to have every confidence in the ability of the parent body to perform the functions required of it. Chief librarians themselves have displayed the greatest lack of faith in the ability of the Library Association to act on their behalf. They have even formed their own separate society for the negotiation of salaries. If the L.A. is powerless to negotiate for chief officers, how much more useful can it be to the humble assistant?

G. WHEATLEY,
Deputy Librarian, Dartford P.L.

Mr. Pocklington would like to know why thousands of members of the A.A.L. couldn't care less about its future. Perhaps he would be interested in my views on the subject. I am a library assistant of some ten years' standing, and I am still in the throes of passing two remaining examinations to qualify as a Chartered Librarian. My duties in the branch library in which I work are such that I spend the majority of my time at the counter serving by day housewives and during the evening children and tired industrial workers. Ninety per cent of these people want reading matter with which they can relax, and whether I've passed any examinations at all has little or no bearing on the enquiries I can satisfy. All the qualifications I need to fulfill my duties are a good memory, physical well-being and a sense of humour.

The salary I receive is the same anyone with no library experience or examinations, but the same age as myself, would receive; and the shortage

of staff is such that people of this nature would not be discouraged. I am off duty two nights each week at 5 p.m., and one whole day, during which time I study for my forthcoming examinations and indulge in normal social activities.

What inducement does the A.A.L. offer to me to care about it at present, let alone in the future? Many of its meetings are held at times I cannot attend, about subjects which have no appeal. I pay an annual subscription to the Library Association which I heartily begrudge and from which I receive no visible benefit, and I sign automatically that I wish to belong to the A.A.L. My younger colleagues do the same, and it appears to mean even less to them than it does to me.

I am apathetic about organized leisure hours, but I am interested in my job, even though the above may seem to contradict this. I have visited many public libraries when off duty, and have gained considerable knowledge of administration and organization, a subject which interests me. I have also attended two annual conferences of the Library Association, and intend visiting a third this year.

To sum up, Mr. Pocklington, what bearing has the A.A.L. on my *present* position and my *future*? The chief concern of all library assistants, if they will but admit it, is the manoeuvres of NALGO to better their working conditions—and, in a half-hearted fashion, the passing of exams. by a few who see this as the only way they can move from one authority to another and better themselves financially.

JOSEPHINE I. SALOND,
Assistant, Birmingham P.L.

Having read Mr. Pocklington's contribution to the April *Assistant*, I asked a junior whether she would mind if the A.A.L. ceased to exist, and was rather disconcerted to receive in reply an emphatic "Yes." In fact, she seemed quite startled to think that there was any possibility of such an event occurring.

My faith in teen-age assistants

somewhat restored, I started thinking about the age problem. The term *Assistant Librarian* can and does cover all ages from 16 to 60, and all posts from that of the newest junior to that of Deputy. To keep such a widely differing body fully satisfied and fully represented on Council, it would appear necessary for it to be split up into numerous sub-divisions. Thus one might have a section for juniors under 20, Chief Assistants under 35, Deputies under 50—the possibilities are endless, and would provide the classification student with good practice. The point is that the A.A.L. does cover a very wide field at present, and cannot be blamed too much if its Council errs towards the higher age group. Drastic reduction in the age and status of members would bring equal outcry from the other end of the scale.

If the Association is to be purely for junior assistants, then make it so. Kick out all the Deputies, Chief Assistants, and other lofty beings, and make them have more say in the L.A.—at present, L.A. Branch meetings all too frequently develop into a gathering of the Chiefs. Merely to swing one end of a see-saw up instead of the other does not seem a very satisfactory solution to the problem. In any case, self-criticism is surely a healthy sign and not the action of a decaying body. And maybe "young Fred" and "little Kate" care more than you think—have you tried asking them?

B. J. COLLINS,
Branch Librarian, Portsmouth P.L.

THE NEW YORK LIBRARY CLUB

The New York Library Club, composed of public, college, university, school, and special librarians in the Greater New York area, sends greetings to confreres in other countries. The Club realizes a unique opportunity in its location at a port of entry of the United States and at the seat of the United Nations, and hopes that librarians planning to visit the area will make themselves known.

The Hospitality Committee of the

New York Library Club will make it possible to plan a profitable use of time for librarians when in New York and will be helpful in making arrangements for visiting librarians, archivists, documentalists, and bibliographers to meet their colleagues.

On behalf of the Hospitality Committee, I will greatly appreciate your co-operation in notifying me of the approximate dates when any librarians from your country will be visiting New York City. In turn, the Club will be happy to inform your local library association should New York librarians visit your shores during the coming months.

LEE ASH,

*Chairman, Hospitality Committee,
New York Library Club.*

Address :

Leo Ash, Librarian
Carnegie Endowment for
International Peace
United Nations Plaza at 46th St.
New York City 17.
Tel.: OXford 7-3131.

"SELLING THE LIBRARY SERVICE"

Although in accord with many of the findings of the A.A.L. Conference, particularly resolution number 8, I must disagree with the section on Display. I suggest that displays result in a great deal of wasted effort, particularly when compared with essential tasks which are not carried out. By essential tasks I mean the adequate selection and revision of stock and a *proper* exploitation of stock by the provision of a "Readers' Librarian."

I consider the suggestion that display should receive greater attention in our professional education as reactionary and out of place.

L. S. FRANCIS,

Student, N.W. Polytechnic.

In connection with Resolution 8 "That the Library Association should be asked to consider appointing a professional Public Relations Officer . . .", the following sentence taken from the *Actes de Conseil de la FIAB*, 20th

session, Zagreb 1954, p. 190, may be of interest:—

"At Sundbyberg, a satellite town to Stockholm, a special state grant has been given for the temporary appointment of a public relations officer, a librarian who works with the community at large in order to interest people in books and reading."

More details appeared in *Bogens Verden*, May, 1954.

H. A. WHATLEY,

Scottish School of Librarianship.

PRIMER OF WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Reading the 59th Annual Report of the A.A.L., I was amazed at the following statement:—

"Plans for a Primer of Work with Young People have had to be abandoned for the time being because of the difficulty of finding a suitable author."

Are we to assume that there is no children's librarian in the British Isles to-day possessing the requisite qualifications for authorship of such a primer—or that the children's librarians who might be capable are so rare that the search for them involves a mighty task?

I am just about to consign this report to the waste-paper basket before any of the fifty qualified children's librarians who are at present my colleagues in the Boys' and Girls' Division of the Toronto Public Libraries see it and assume that the state of work with children in England is akin to that of Denmark in Hamlet's day!

CHRISTINA DUFF STEWART,

*Interne, Boys' and Girls' Division,
Toronto P.L.*

[The A.A.L. is still eager to publish such a work, provided that the high standard of its previous primers can be maintained. The Hon. Editor (Secretary of the Press and Publications Committee) will be interested to hear from any children's librarian who feels impelled to respond to Miss Stewart's challenge.—Hon. Ed.]

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

Mr. Hartley's letter in the May issue prompts me to write of the English Literature course I took by correspondence last year.

I had no trouble about the timing of the lessons. Indeed, my tutor was most accommodating in this matter, and mutual arrangements were made which covered both my tutor's holidays and my own.

The lesson notes themselves, however, made a very poor showing against the notes of a correspondence college such as Wolsey Hall. The information given about each author was not of much help, while any appraisal of an author's work given was invariably in ejaculatory words or phrases, lifted from one of the histories of English literature. Admittedly, the notes were intended as pointers to the student's reading, but they were very poor guides. How helpful it would have been, for example, if authors' dates had been given, together with the dates of publication of their principal works.

Actual mistakes were not absent. For example, a knighthood was conferred on William Wycherley; Wordsworth was made Poet-Laureate before Southey; while Andrew Young was accused of (or credited with?) writing "The Night Thoughts." These are three gross errors which I remember; a student retailing these "facts" in an examination would be severely penalised. These mistakes cannot be ascribed to "typist's errors." Nor were "amendments and addition sheets . . ." sent for this course.

It would seem that there is a case for insistence upon greater accuracy and care in compiling and editing these courses.

L. BULMER.

Senior Assistant, Huddersfield P.L.

JUNIOR ASSISTANTS

Now that Mr. Banks has left the Brentford and Chiswick staff for higher regions, I can perhaps answer his letter in the May issue without incur-

ring the charge of attempting to stifle the views of my own staff.

To some extent I agree with his criticisms of Miss Wilden-Hart's nomenclature, but she has a point with her distinction between mature and immature sub-professionals. The line is not an easy one to draw, but Mr. Banks will remember from his bibliography studies that there *are* ways of reproducing these awkward illustrations with shades of grey as well as the nice firm black and white lines. I would point out that before he finally qualified he was himself considered by the senior staff as a "mature" sub-professional, though such grades were not designated in our less organised library society.

May I also say a word in reply to Mr. Foskett. Since transferring his allegiance from the ratepayer to the metal box, he has been growing an enormous chip on one shoulder about public libraries, and now takes every opportunity it seems of denigrating public librarians and dismissing them as all rather worthless.

Now, since his admirable achievements in academic fields, the other shoulder seems to be similarly decorated—this time with a positive chip in favour of graduates. Is Mr. Foskett trying to set himself up as a public relations officer for special librarians in general, and graduates in particular? If so I do not think he will achieve very much by his present methods, except perhaps to widen the rift between public and special librarians and destroy sympathies on both sides.

Of course Miss Wilden-Hart's aside about graduates was pointless—most asides are—but you have to get pretty sensitive to go round picking them up and magnifying them until they are grossly out of proportion. And Mr. Foskett, judging from his recent petty note in the *L.A. Record* about public librarians, seems not to be the person to do it.

E. E. MOON,

Deputy Librarian, Brentford and Chiswick P.L.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE NOVEL PROBLEM

(With apologies to Paul Jennings).

Many of our worthy public librarians are reluctant to admit any restriction
On the provision of fiction.
They are, I am happy to say, zealous to defend my privilege,
As a common man, to choose to read privilege,
And, moreover, to have it supplied at public expense.
This is an attitude that reveals sound common sense:
A courageous, realistic, let-us-face-facts sort of attitude,
Which avoids that pious platitude
About the right book, the right reader, and the right time,
And instead approves of good, saleable stuff about oppression, lust, and crime.
Stuff that will not be out of place in vans on village greens,
And similar bibliothecal scenes,
Such as branches in grubby back streets (or grubby branches in back streets, I
do not remember which),
Where public librarians, I am told, find their occupational niche.
There are those who say it would be something of a mile-stein,
If public libraries began to provide such works as, let us say, Beilstein;
But I cannot, with an easy conscience,
Subscribe to this sort of idealistic nonsense.
I think the advanced stuff should be left to the special liberian
(Who, you remember, is obliged to be erudite and Scaligerian).
He knows how to cope,
And does not have to collect all the doubtful books for councillors, or dispense
other varieties of soft soap.
O worthy public librarians, do not allow yourselves to be turned aside from your
true path by the voices of fanatics,
Or try to dabble in science and technology, or the abstruse realms of mathe-
matics;
You will be much happier with your vari-coloured Clubs,
And will be closer to the common man, who (of course) spends all his time at
football matches or in pubs;
Who, if he has to read, finds it something of an affliction,
And reads only fiction.

ICARIUS.

BIRMINGHAM CONFERENCE, 1955

A group at
the final
general session.
Left to right:
W. Tynemouth
(Newcastle),
G. E. Smith
(West Riding),
R. Brown
(Gillingham),
and
L. G. Lovell
(Middlesbrough)

*For full report
see our May
issue.*



FRICION (TOYS) AT A.G.M.

(60TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 4TH MAY, 1955).

FOR 4TH MAY (not July) the Greater London Division organised the kind of programme which is now becoming expected of them—theatre, food and a lively meeting. Thornton Wilder's "The Matchmaker" proved to be a feast of fun, and those who spent 10s. so wisely must have been heartened to hear that "Money's like manure—it ain't no good unless you spread it around."

At Lyons' (free advertisement) our party became entangled on the third floor with an equally large party of martial elderly ladies who bore slight resemblance to A.A.L. members, despite the implication of the motion to come in the evening. Our organisation proved superior and we won through to booked tables for tea and baked beans among other things.

The evening proceedings began with the induction of the President by his predecessor, Mr. J. S. Parsonage. Kind and deserved words were said on both sides, and these perhaps were more sincere and deliberate than a later aside of the President's which dismissed Past-Presidents as *old has-beens*.

The routine A.G.M. business was despatched with machine-gun rapidity. Well-rehearsed proposers and seconders had the minutes taken as read, the annual report and financial statement received, and two Honorary Auditors, Miss Rita Ensing and Mr. Michael Wise, appointed with little waste of time.

This year produced no battery of contentious motions from familiar London members, but the one which did feature on the agenda paper ensured that placid routine would be disturbed for a while. It sought to amend the rules to ensure that three of the National Councillors elected annually would be under thirty years of age. The motion was splendidly put by Mr. Pocklington (Chelmsford), who illustrated the simplicity of his solution with an instructional talk on the principle of friction toys and a demonstration on a window-sill of the Council Chamber with an actual model, presumably by permission of a younger Pocklington. The motion was seconded by Mr. Westacott (Croydon), and if these two young speakers may be taken as representative, the Council will be stronger for its infusion of young blood.

After some discussion, which featured an attack on the motion by the aged Deputy Librarian of Bilston Public Library, and an accusation directed at Mr. Pocklington (from a most unusual quarter) of "starry-eyed romanticism," the situation was quickly and smoothly resolved by the gift for compromise of "Old Father Tyne-mouth," a name bestowed by a younger adversary. His amendment, seconded by Mr. Stockham, seeking to increase the number of National Councillors to nine, three of whom must be under thirty, was almost unanimously supported.

Under *Any Other Business* the President read a letter from Mr. Sharr and a number of other librarians in Western Australia, sending greetings and best wishes on the occasion of the A.A.L.'s Diamond Jubilee. This warm and friendly gesture was received with acclaim by all present and the President promised to convey our pleasure and gratitude.

Members will have an opportunity to read the Presidential Address for themselves in this issue, so it would be irrelevant to pre-judge it here, except to say that the care and industry which went into its preparation were matched by the clarity and good humour of the presentation.

ERIC MOON.

THE
ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS
(Section of the Library Association)

Presents

RESOURCES DISCOVERED

directed by
WALTER F. BROOME

" RESOURCES DISCOVERED " is a 16 mm. sound film produced by the Association of Assistant Librarians and directed by Walter F. Broome. It is designed for showing to the general public, commerce, industry and schools. The larger industrial organizations have realised the need for a library service and have provided it for themselves. The smaller business organizations need such a service at least as much and this film shows how they can turn with confidence to the Public Library Service.

The film is available now. It plays for 11 minutes and can be bought for 10 guineas or hired for 5s. for the first day and 1s. for each additional day, the original hire charge recurring on the eighth day.

Please use the attached form if you wish to rent or buy a copy of RESOURCES DISCOVERED.

Application to hire/buy A.A.L. Film

" RESOURCES DISCOVERED "

Name.....

Full postal address

Play date or dates

Type of projector to be used: Make.....Model.....

Is a charge to be made for admission to screening?.....

I enclose a P.O. for /- (Cash with order under 20/- please).

I agree to the conditions of hire.

Signed.....

Date.....195..

To E. E. MOON (Hon. Secretary,
Association of Assistant Librarians),
Central Library,
Duke's Avenue,
Chiswick, W.4.

THE RIGHT TO VOTE

(COUNCIL NOTES: MAY 5)

FOR SEVERAL YEARS a special committee has been considering and preparing a revised set of Rules for the Association. After such careful mastication it was hoped that the digestion of the resulting document would be painless, but more than faint rumblings were heard and the Rules provided one of the liveliest debates of the day. The rules governing the election of National Councillors was changed to meet the wishes of the previous day's A.G.M., despite the fears of Mr. Green (Manchester). He was assured by the President that "we have always realised the danger of the Greater London Division."

An attempt was made to reduce the number of members required to call a Special General Meeting from 100 to 50. Mr. Surridge dismissed as "a slur on the membership" the suggestion that 50 members would call such a meeting for frivolous reasons, but the amendment was defeated and the century is still required.

Intense heat was generated by the question of the right of co-opted members of Council to vote. Mr. Surridge, who as Honorary Assistant Secretary, is a co-opted Officer of the Council, defended this with suffragette intensity, revealing that he had been voting illegally all this year. Though neither railings nor chains were in evidence it was clear that he had come prepared for a filibuster, as his neighbour reported that at the beginning of the meeting he had organised cigarettes, acid drops and other equipment as for a siege. When the moment of decision arrived, Mr. Surridge roundly declared: "Whether I have the power to vote or not, I'm voting against it," but his raised hand was watched carefully for the rest of the meeting by Mr. Smith, of Manchester, and as carefully ignored by the platform. The complications arising from the consideration of this item are perhaps best illustrated by the following quotations:

"This difference is too subtle for me" (Mr. McColvin).

"Now that I've caught up with this, I agree with Mr. Jones" (President).

"It's not Local Government, but local government" (Mr. Phillips).

Among matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting, the progress of the 1954 A.G.M. suggestion for an Honours Thesis was noted. The Secretary of the L.A. had reported that "the Assessors are not opposed to any project likely to lead to the advance of knowledge in librarianship," and indicated that an essay of appropriate length (30,000 words) and depth might meet these grandiose requirements. The L.A. Council had referred the matter to the L.A./ASLIB Joint Committee which is discussing the long-term revision of the syllabus. Mr. Carver wondered whether we had figures for the depth, and it was suggested by Mr. Tynemouth that it should be measured in fathoms. Mr. Bill was apparently unable to distinguish between tacking something on to the syllabus, and adding something to it, which is perhaps understandable.

One nomination had been received for the office of Honorary Editor, but consideration of this and the office of Honorary Publications Officer was deferred until the September meeting, when it is hoped that further nominations will be forthcoming as a result of the invitation in the May issue of this journal. Two nominations for the office of Honorary Assistant Treasurer were received, and the excitement of a secret ballot (which found the Honorary Secretary short of paper) was followed by the appointment of Mr. H. G. Holloway, of Eastbourne, for the remainder of this year.

Among publications on which progress was reported by Press and Publications Committee was a Primer of Documentary Reproduction. Mr. Mason (E. Midland Division), who purported to be "standing up for himself" (and with his many inches he looks capable of it), thought that such a publication would be rendered superfluous by his own on "non-book materials," but Council stubbornly decided to investigate the possibilities nevertheless. Arising from the A.A.L. Conference suggestion that a Primer of Display Work and Publicity be prepared it was decided that an annotated catalogue should be published in connection with a projected exhibition of display materials, to include a chapter on display work in libraries. If the exhibition does not materialise the matter will come before Press and Publications again. The Hon. Editor reported that he is still considering the "Display of the Month" feature suggested by the Conference.

A further recommendation from the A.A.L. Conference was considered by the Education Committee, and the L.A. are to be asked to consider the possibility of greater emphasis on the subject of display methods in the syllabus. The long-number controversy which continues to baffle classification students reared its head once more, and a most complex motion seeking further clarification of the examiners' policy is to be forwarded to the L.A. A letter from a student on Correspondence Courses stated "At the risk of sounding like a Horlicks advertisement, may I say that I had a bad examinations record until I tried them."

Mr. W. G. Smith reported that the Correspondence Courses Committee had met at dawn. Their recommendation of Mr. Davey (Edmonton) as Honorary Education Secretary to succeed Mrs. Martin was unanimously approved by Council.

The report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee brought confessions of ignorance about finance from Mr. Phillips and Mr. Surridge (Chairman of Finance), and as a result of inaction on a Yorkshire motion an expression of horror from Mr. Tynemouth "at the thought of the Yorkshire Division lying on the table." Arrangements for the hiring and selling of the new film "Resources Discovered," which Mr. Broome had shown to Council before the meeting, were approved, but even the drama of cinema was dwarfed by Council's according to Mrs. Martin the highest honour the Association can give. She is to join the select band of Honorary Fellows, and a suitable presentation will be made, probably at the next A.G.M. Mr. Phillips heralded this as the end of a phase in A.A.L. history.

At this stage the Brighton Library School arrived as guests and observers of the Council (a new departure). One of my co-reporters notes it as "the entry of the gladiators—one man, umpteen girls and Mr. Lockwood." This is perhaps hard on Mr. Lockwood, even by Thomas Clearwater standards.

Plans for the next week-end conference were discussed, a sub-committee set up, and proposals asked for regarding a theme by the end of June. It is hoped that either the Eastern Division will entertain us at Cambridge or the Wessex Division at Southampton. The representatives of these Divisions could fairly be described as cagey about committing their committees, and it is worth quoting Mr. Stebbing on this point—"My committee is a bit funny." A detailed plan for the conference had already been hammered out by Messrs. Surridge and W. G. Smith, perhaps in other precincts, but Mr. Tomlinson felt that "no inner caucus should stampede the Council into a decision."

Library legislation featured yet again on the agenda, but the only

Divisional motion taken up was one from Manchester deploring the secrecy with which the matter is surrounded. The Library Association is to be asked to produce a comprehensive document for consideration by all members.

Five minutes only were needed before the clock face was divided neatly at six o'clock, many had departed and others were leaning back at perilous angles on chairs or slumping slightly on tables. The result of this general disintegration was that three of the six motions forwarded by the A.A.L. Conference were deferred until the next meeting. The exhibition of material shown at Birmingham is to be repeated for a week at Battersea Library in the summer, the Editor of the Record is to be asked to invite the co-operation of librarians in keeping the files of publicity material in the L.A. Library up to date, and it is hoped that G.L.D. and the London and Home Counties Branch will co-operate in putting on an exhibition of commercial display materials at Chaucer House.

The Council rose at dusk.

ERIC MOON.

STUDENTS' PROBLEMS

edited by O. S. TOMLINSON

THE FOLLOWING is contributed by R. C. Bengé:

It has been pointed out to me by Dr. Walford that my answer to Question 7 of the December, 1954, Assistance to Readers' examination [in the Examinations Supplement to the February, 1955 *Assistant Librarian*] contained a number of misprints, some mistakes in emphasis and several downright errors. In order that students should not be misled, I enclose a corrected version with apologies.

The fact that these mistakes were perpetrated by one who is supposed to know about such things suggests that the poor student is facing a formidable task indeed. Mr. Atkinson's *cri de coeur*, "Ein Kleiner Nachtmär" in the March *Assistant Librarian*, emphasises the same point. However, the outlook is not so gloomy as all this might seem to imply. In this question the examiner offered a choice of one out of four foreign national bibliographies. It can be stated with confidence that the candidate will always be offered such a choice since such questions are intended for those who have personal experience or special knowledge of *one* foreign language national bibliography. This is a much less troublesome problem which any student should be able to solve in spite of the shortcomings of text-books or even tutors!

GERMANY. The publications of East Germany and West Germany are covered as follows:

EAST GERMANY

(Leipzig: Deutsche Bücherei; Börsenverein der deutschen Buchhändler).

1. *Deutsche Nationalbibliographie*, 1946— . Part A (book-trade publications), weekly; Part B (non-book-trade publications), 2 per month. Each with 24 classes; there is a quarterly subject index to each part.
2. *Jahresverzeichnis des deutschen Schrifttums*, 1945— . Annual author list cumulation of the foregoing, Parts A and B, *less* the dissertations listed in Part B. These lists claim to cover West German publications as well as publications in German elsewhere (e.g., Switzerland; Austria). Subject and catchword index.
3. *Deutsches Bücherverzeichnis*, 1941— . An author list on the five-yearly

plan. The period 1941-50 is, however, being covered as a whole, to be followed by a list for the 1951-55 period. Includes periodicals and maps.

WEST GERMANY

(Frankfurt/Main: Deutsche Bibliothek; Börsenverein deutscher Verleger—und Buchhändlerverbände).

1. *Deutsche Bibliographie Wöchentliches Verzeichnis*, 1953—, weekly. Preceded by the *Bibliographie der deutschen Bibliothek*, 1947—, weekly. Book-trade publications; 26 classes.
2. *Deutsche Bibliographie. Halbjahresverzeichnis*, 1951—. A half-yearly author list, with subject index, which cumulates the weekly list and attempts to cover all publications in German.
3. *Deutsche Bibliographie*, 1945-50. An author list on the five-yearly pattern. Includes maps, but excludes school text-books, music and periodicals.

Of the two series of bibliographies the East German is usually recognised as the fuller.

ITALY. The National Library at Florence receives copies of all Italian publications, by virtue of legal deposit. These are listed in the

Bollettino delle pubblicazioni italiane, 1886—, monthly. 22 classes; includes maps, music and new periodicals.

Giornale della libreria, 1886—, twice monthly, is the corresponding trade list, published by the Associazione italiana degli editori.

Libri e riviste, 1950—, monthly, and *Italia che scrive*, 1918—, monthly, include listings and, in the case of the former, reviews of books and analyses of current numbers of non-scientific and technical periodicals.

SPAIN. The basic current list of books is the

Bibliografía hispánica, 1942—, monthly. Published by the Instituto Nacional del Libro Español; classified by U.D.C.; annual author and title indexes. Complementary to it, in a sense, is the

Bibliotheca hispana, 1943—. The whole is divided into three subject groups, each of which appears quarterly; annual index. Published by the Instituto Nicolás Antonio. Includes foreign material on Spain. Apart from annotated entries for books, this list includes abstracts from some 350 journals. See also Winchell's Guide. *Supplement*, 1950-52, 1A82.

Dr. Walford has also drawn attention to two smaller points in connection with the same paper. He writes: "(a) In dealing with Q.9 of the Assistance to Readers paper, the reviewer has overlooked the claims of the *Bulletin Analytique* (Paris, 1940—weekly), which indexes some 5,000 scientific and technical journals, with indicative abstracts, and of *IBZ*. I agree that these are not at Registration level, but it is misleading to say (p.xvi, line 7) that the *Industrial Arts Index* is the most comprehensive, without adding some qualification. (b) Lists of chemical periodicals. It is so very easy to misspell the compilers of *Periodica Chimica* (p.xvi, line 15) that I advise quoting the title, with the note that it lists periodicals abstracted by *Chemisches Zentralblatt* and is therefore complementary to the *Chemical Abstracts* list."

We are indebted to Dr. Walford for his vigilance in these tricky matters, and also to Mr. Henrik Jones, the Librarian and Information Officer of the Library Association, who points out two small items in Q.12 (p.xvi) which should be corrected. It is stated, he says, that volume i, part (b) of Sadleir's *19th Century Fiction* deals only with twenty-six 19th century authors, whereas in fact it deals with many more than that

number, although comparative scarcities and full descriptions of twenty-six are included. He also draws attention to the fact that Wing's *Short Title Catalogue* is not in two volumes, as stated, but in three, the work having been completed in 1951.

MORE ABOUT OUR LIBRARY SCHOOLS

WE ARE GRATEFUL for Mr. Paton's reply to our article, for it gives us the opportunity to make clearer what apparently we have not made clear enough.

Our article was written in the belief that, after 8 or 9 years' working experience of the library schools, certain salient problems have arisen. Mr. Paton equates our "serious problems" with "trouble" and "crisis looms ahead," and attempts to show that if all is not for the best in the library schools, it is certainly not far short of it. Troubles and crises sometimes occur when problems are either ignored or remain unsolved. We re-state what we consider to be these salient problems:

(i) We believe that Mr. Stokes's wish that staff of the library schools should be able to resume practising librarianship is well-founded, and regret that it has not happened on any significant scale. There is a direct connection between practice and teaching and we think it cannot be maintained effectively if the staff of the schools remain largely static until they retire. The difficulty is not of librarians' making, and the solution is not in our hands. Local authorities seeking to fill senior posts, and for reasons best known to themselves, apparently do not regard experience in administration of library schools and the professional and intellectual abilities such work engenders as satisfactory substitutes for practical library experience.

(ii) We do not underestimate the value of the work done by the schools. But we regret the apparent inability of the schools to enrich with original work the field of professional studies. Here we are probably in agreement with Mr. Paton, although his solution is that there should be fewer and larger schools. We have already indicated that we think this may be a correct step. But the abolition of some library schools, providing new locations for others and the consequent reshuffling and possible redundancy of some lecturers, seems to us no small matter. It is a "serious problem," and Mr. Paton in drawing our attention to it can hardly accuse us of fabricating problems or exaggerating their importance. Will he seek to prove that this is, on the contrary, a small matter of policy and administration or alternatively that it is so pregnant with the seeds of crisis that he must deny paternity?

(iii) The lack of opportunity for full-time lecturers to test their teaching and outlook by practice must, we are certain, be a nagging doubt for many of them. How to give new insight to students in such matters as book selection, library planning, relations with local government departments, catalogue construction, production of printed matter or readers' advisory services without recent practical experience against which to measure a critical and evaluative approach, seems to us no small problem. Are we again guilty of fabrication, or is it because Mr. Paton sees no solution that he is so strangely silent about this matter?

We have other bones to pick with Mr. Paton, but they may be classed as plain misrepresentations or fancy embroidery. Examples are:

(i) Mr. Paton says that "it is a gross exaggeration that 'a great deal of the teaching at full-time schools . . . is done by visiting lecturers.'" Those dots of his conceal our "and almost all the teaching at their part-time appendages and at the innumerable technical colleges throughout the country." We hope we are forgiven this mention of the question of part-time classes in an article on library schools. As to number of visiting lecturers, see *Students' Handbook*, 1955.

(ii) We agree that it "is indeed a naive assumption that because a man is a successful Chief Librarian, he is therefore a good teacher." We say in our article "that experience and eminence are not the only qualities demanded of a lecturer," but infer that they are desirable. Who is assuming what, Mr. Paton?

(iii) We regret that we did not make clear enough that by examiners we meant those who bear full responsibility for the setting of papers—the Senior Examiners, the Subject Assessors and the Senior Assessors. Look again, Mr. Paton, at the list in the *Students' Handbook* and perhaps you will now agree that there is evidence of greater weight in the Examining Body controlled by our Association than in the largely uncontrolled and uninspected teaching body. Or do H.M.Is. do the work satisfactorily?

THOMAS CLEARWATER.

ROUND THE DIVISIONS—13

SUSSEX DIVISION

THE SOUTH COAST BRANCH of the Library Assistants' Association was formed at a meeting at Brighton Public Library on the 29th May, 1912. The *Brighton Herald* gave a very full account of the proceedings and we learn that Mr. Berwick Sayers, President of the L.A.A., was there and "gave some helpful counsel in matters of detail."

The Branch (later to be known as Division) included all the libraries from Hastings to Southampton—a distance of almost 100 miles. The membership in the first year was 33 and by the end of the Great War had risen to 44. Although membership increased steadily in the years following, interest in Divisional activities waned. This was felt to be due to the unwieldy size of the Division and accordingly, in 1924, it was agreed to divide into two Sections, East and West. This arrangement did not work out very happily, so in 1927 a ballot was taken of the membership of 78, and by an overwhelming majority it was decided to split into two quite separate Divisions, to be called South Eastern and Wessex respectively. The two Divi-

sions have always maintained the most cordial relations and it has long been the practice to hold an annual Joint Meeting, in each Division alternately.

[We are indebted for the historical details given above, to Miss Grace Dean, of Worthing Public Library, who retired from the position of Divisional Secretary at the end of 1948, after 25 years' service.]

The new South Eastern divisional area coincided exactly with the County of Sussex, which is why the name of the Division was changed to Sussex last year. The South East is usually taken to include Kent, which, of course has its own Division. Sussex has nine municipal and two county libraries, but a dearth of special and university libraries. Membership at present is 124 and attendance at last year's meetings varied from 27 to 72. (In fairness it should be added that the latter included a number of students from the Brighton School of Librarianship!)

Sussex is 70 miles from east to west, with Brighton at the half-way mark. Brighton or Hove is therefore the natural choice for the Annual

THE THURLOE SERIES

*of special library
editions——ideal*

*for travelling
libraries*

Arts and Crafts
Cycling Tourist Guides
Electrical
Engineering
Gardening
Pets and Livestock
Modelling, etc.
Modelling, Railways
Photography
Wireless and
Television
Juveniles and
Elementary Readers

*Catalogues and Samples on
request*

OPPENHEIM & Co. Ltd.

*Library and Wholesale
Booksellers*

25, THURLOE STREET,
SOUTH KENSINGTON,
LONDON, S.W.7.

Telephone :
Kensington 6807 & 9431

THE HOLT-JACKSON BOOK COMPANY LIMITED



*Public and County
Library Booksellers*



MONTAUBAN
CHAMBERS,
ST. ANNES-ON-SEA,
LANCS.

Telephone: St. Annes 575



London Showroom:
13, BRITTON STREET,
CLERKENWELL ROAD, E.C.1
Telephone: Clerkenwell 3250.

General Meeting, while other meetings are distributed as fairly as possible. Including the A.G.M., five meetings are held in the year, a typical programme has three meetings at which papers are read, the fourth is a quiz, mock library committee, etc., and the fifth a tour of the Monotype Works, British Museum, etc.

Sussex often acts as host to both the L.A. Annual Conference and the London and Home Counties Branch Weekend Conference, so members are able to meet the "big guns" of the profession. Apart from the Conference, however, it is very rare that meetings of the Branch are held outside London, so to a certain extent the Division has to fulfil functions normally performed by a Branch.

The Brighton School of Librarianship has already been mentioned. In co-operation with the Division, the School holds part-time classes for the Entrance and Registration Examinations. In the past the Division has held week-end schools and last year a One-day School in Bibliography was

held in the Royal Pavilion, Brighton. This entailed a minimum of expense to members and over one-third took advantage of the opportunity to attend. The latest venture in the field of education in librarianship is the publication of a union list of textbooks in the libraries of the Division. This 48-page booklet, priced at 9d., is interleaved and will be kept up-to-date by six-monthly supplements published in the Divisional News Letter.

The News Letter was launched in 1949 by the then Divisional Secretary, Mr. R. Rowsell, and is issued about seven times a year. It has proved invaluable in keeping the members posted on Divisional and national activities.

The Sussex Division has always been lucky in the co-operation it has received from all the Chief Librarians in the area and in the hospitality so kindly given by the various Library Authorities. It is a small Division, but a very keen and friendly one.

Berkshire Bookbinding

Co., Ltd.

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS

NON - FICTION AND
REFERENCE BINDINGS
ARE OUR SPECIALITY

**27, ELDON TERRACE
READING, BERKS.**

Telephone: Reading 60688.

LONDON NEWSPAPER STRIKE

Any important news items at home and abroad which readers may have missed during the absence of London Daily Newspapers are, of course, recorded and indexed as usual in KEESING'S Documentation of Current Affairs—more than a stop-gap: **AN INSTITUTION FOR ALL TIMES.** Full details from Keesing's, Keynsham, Bristol.

CRAMERS *for MUSIC*

MUSICAL LITERATURE
AND MUSIC BINDING

**139, New Bond Street
London, W.1**

★ Special Music Enquiry Bureau

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 48. NO. 7

JULY, 1955



EDITORIAL

DEMAND FOR a Municipal Libraries Section gathers momentum. We understand that the other existing Sections—most of them of course representing special library interests—are already agreed in principle that the formation of such a Section would be desirable. (The argument that municipal library matters are at present discussed by the L.A. in full Council, whereas special library matters go first to the Section committee has often been quoted in its support). Only the A.A.L. holds back, and the matter will come again before the A.A.L. Council in September.

Our attitude to this question is neither selfish nor reactionary. It is clear that the establishment of a Municipal Libraries Section could present a very serious threat to the continued existence of the A.A.L., the majority of whose members are drawn from municipal libraries, and no assurances by the Library Association, however well intentioned, could possibly eliminate the danger. It might well be that the L.A., with the support of the other Sections, would be willing to guarantee the continued existence of the A.A.L. on terms similar to those obtaining at present. But the L.A. could not guarantee that the number of members continuing to "opt" for the A.A.L., and to take an active part in its meetings, would be sufficient to ensure that our services to the profession could continue on the same scale as heretofore. It has been suggested that should a Municipal Libraries Section be formed, the number of Sections which a member might join without additional charge might be increased to three. This could serve artificially to bolster up our declined status, but the challenge would remain.

We must consider very carefully whether we wish to continue as a mass movement for all assistant librarians, whatever their status and needs, and if so what we have to offer them once their examinations are over. Or whether we are prepared now to concentrate on our service to student librarians and accept the fact that competition from a new Section for municipal librarians must result in reduced membership, or at the least a reduced active membership.

A further consideration is always relevant whenever constitutional changes affecting the A.A.L. are discussed. The present arrangement of Branches and Sections, in which the A.A.L. appears to some as the ugly duckling, does at least enable an army of members to perform yeoman service to the cause of librarianship through the framework of the A.A.L. Whether they, or others, would find opportunity for similar service in another setting, where the vital A.A.L. atmosphere was lacking, can only be discovered by experience. The A.A.L. works; before giving our support to any fundamental changes we must be satisfied that whatever organization is to replace it will work no less well.

THE GREENWOOD LIBRARY FOR LIBRARIANS

By A. L. SMYTH, *Manchester P.L.*

THE STORY of Thomas Greenwood¹ is that of the industrious apprentice from a modest home who made good. Greenwood attributed much of his success as a prosperous publisher of trade magazines to his use of public libraries, particularly the old Campfield Library, Manchester. He was a strong and influential advocate of public libraries, as his writings testify. *Public Libraries* became a standard textbook and went through four editions between 1886 and 1894, and his *Life of Edward Edwards* shows how deeply he appreciated the problems of librarianship. In 1897, he founded *Greenwood's Library Year Book* which he edited until 1900. Unlike many of the philanthropic promoters of public libraries, who were his contemporaries, he was far sighted enough to realize that bricks and mortar were not enough and that the ultimate success of the public library movement largely depended on improving the status and raising the educational standards of library staffs. In a paper read to the Library Association in 1901, he said:—

"A library school is greatly needed, which shall be the headquarters of the Library Association, the Library Assistants' Association and the Public Library movement. Such a building might be known as the Edward Edwards' Library School."²

A year later he gave to the Manchester Public Libraries, in memory of Edward Edwards, a collection of 459 books, most of which had belonged to Edwards, including volumes of letters, day-books and other manuscript items.

Greenwood decided that the best way in which he could help the then struggling profession of librarianship was by "bringing together a library of such books as may be of professional service to librarians." At considerable expense and with great enthusiasm he collected a library of 10,000 volumes covering the fields of library economy, bibliography, printing and book production. This he transferred to the Manchester Public Libraries in September, 1905, on condition that it was to be made available to librarians, library assistants and students of librarianship. To ensure that the library would be kept alive, he also left a bequest of £5,000.

With the proceeds from this endowment, supplemented by the financial help of the Manchester Libraries Committee, and together with gifts from libraries and individuals from all over the world, the Greenwood Library has grown until it now contains over 20,000 volumes, as well as many thousands of newspaper clippings, plans and pamphlets. More than fifty professional periodicals and some four hundred annual reports, library bulletins, etc., are currently received and filed for permanent preservation. Last year 5,589 books were lent for home reading³ and many hundreds of volumes were consulted in the Reference Library. For the student who is not content to limit his acquaintance with professional literature to the hundred or so books required to pass examinations, the Greenwood Library is a rich field indeed.

Nearly every book published on library economy is to be found here, including such worthy items as Constantin's *Bibliothéconomie*, Garnett's *Library Series*, and Guppy's *Special lectures for library assistants*, not to mention the various editions of Brown's *Manual*. There are too, numerous files of library periodicals, some with half-forgotten titles like *L.A.*

Monthly Notes or *The Library Chronicle*. The old periodicals with their reports of professional battles lost and won, contain a surprising number of excellent articles which can be read with profit by all those in search of a philosophy of librarianship. Along with the series of reports which begin with "Conference of Librarians, London, 1877," are many pamphlets, leaflets, letters and newspaper clippings relating to the Library Association. One of these early clippings is an article from *The Globe*, 4th October, 1877, with the title "Reverence for Rubbish," which might have been written by one of our present day cynics;

"Though we are not young and hopeful enough to imagine that much good will result from the Conference of Librarians who are just now comparing notes on professional problems, and putting their heads together for the better construction of wooden shelves, we regard their meeting as a pleasant social incident . . ."

A critical record of the ways of librarians is provided by the very comprehensive collection of library forms and documents made by Stanley Jast. In case one finds these too depressing, there are the novels of library life, *Girls in Green* and *Marion-Martha*, a "whodunit" about a body in the book-stack suitably titled *Death on the Borough Council*, and a volume of quaint humour, *Library Jokes and Jottings*.

The Greenwood Library is particularly rich in its collection of catalogues. First are the great national catalogues such as those of the British Museum, the Library of Congress, the Bibliothèque Nationale and the *Deutscher Gesamtkatalog*. Slightly less extensive are the catalogues of the universities and the learned libraries, like those of the Bodleian, Trinity College and the John Rylands Library. There are the catalogues of what were the great private libraries, *The Britwell Handlist*, *The Ashley Library Catalogue* and the *Bibliotheca Lindesiana*; catalogues of special libraries, for example, those of the Royal Empire Society and the Royal Institute of British Architects; catalogues from Reykjavic to Cape Town, and from Brighton to Aberdeen. Especially useful are those catalogues which attempt to record the publications of particular countries such as *The English Catalogue*, *The U.S. Catalog*, *Bibliographie de la France*, *Bibliotheca Belgice*, *Libreria Italiana*, *Hinrich*, and so on. There are the many tools required to solve the identity of the anonymous or pseudonymous author, Halkett and Laing, Querard, Barbier, Melzi, and the *Deutsches Anonymen Lexicon*.

The library contains a great number of bibliographies of particular subjects, including some very good examples of topographical bibliographies, bibliographies and bio-bibliographies of individual authors, and bibliographies of special classes of authors. Here, too, are the publications of both the Bibliographical Society and the Index Society, as well as the works of the great bibliographers—Watt, De Bure, Brunet and Clement, the erudite monographs of Peignot, and the extensive writings of Dibden and Querard.

Books on every aspect of type, printing, binding, book illustrations, book production, and publishing abound. These include the folios of the *Gesellschaft fur Typenkunde*, the set of "Penrose," and Allnutt's materials for his *History of English Provincial Printing*. Many examples of book illustration are represented, among them the works of Bartsch and Nagler and the publications of the Société Calcographique. Greenwood was particularly keen to provide bibliographical specimens, in order, no doubt, to encourage high standards of taste in our profession. There are copies of books from famous presses ranging from Aldus to The Golden Cockerel as well as some very beautiful examples of both European and Asiatic bindings. The extreme is, in fact, reached with "books" which

are merely blank leaves covered with an elaborate and expensive binding. These are by no means the only bibliographical curiosities, however. Others are midget volumes, chained books, fore-edge paintings, horn books, writings on bark and palm leaves, a revolving Sanskrit manuscript, books with elaborate grangerising, and also the more modern "crime dossier" complete with burnt match-stick and blood-stained railway ticket.

Of exceptional interest are the specimens of manuscripts beginning with a fragment of Coptic uncial papyrus, a volume of various Byzantine and medieval manuscripts taken from old bindings, a beautifully illuminated Book of Hours and a more modern example of illumination in Frances Martindale's copy of *The Lady of Shalott*. Perhaps somewhat neglected nowadays are the large folios of facsimiles of manuscripts which were so excellently printed about the turn of the century. Of these the *Maya Codex*, the *Grimani Missal* and *The Book of Kells* should be noted.

The Greenwood Library, now in its Jubilee Year, is undoubtedly one of the major institutions of our profession. A collection of books such as this gives perspective and repute to Librarianship and the material is here from which we can plan future progress.

- (1) Grace Carlton. *Spade work : the story of Thomas Greenwood*. 1949.
- (2) Typescript in collection of Greenwood's personal papers, Greenwood Library.
- (3) Details of how to borrow books from the Greenwood Library are given in *The Library Association Year Book*.

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR BINDING

FICTION

In Full Rexine with new reinforced unsewn binding our "Standard Fiction Binding" is the most economic in the country.

JUVENILE "FLATS"

We can solve the problems of this class of work with an almost unbreakable binding that has been proved in Libraries, and that we have evolved for all flat ephemeral work at a reasonable price.

NON FICTION AND MUSIC

A rexine spine with waterproof cloth plus a new and greatly improved joint will give hard and long wear to all volumes at a very moderate range of prices.

We will be very happy to rebind any volumes published in any unsewn binding other than spiral bindings.

We must emphasise that we guarantee all work undertaken by us in any process against fair wear and tear and Library usage

ALL ENQUIRIES WELCOME AT
BENLOCK LIMITED

SOUTH BANK · MIDDLESBROUGH · YORKS.

ENGLISH AND GERMAN LIBRARIES

A COMPARISON by W. REUTER.

Assistant Librarian, University Library, Bonn.

A GERMAN studying conditions in British libraries will soon find opportunities for comparison with those of his own country. Though conditions differ in the two countries, he may yet make some cautious generalizations.

Let us first consider the university libraries. The stock of the reference department in the two reading rooms of the London University Library is arranged according to the Dewey Decimal Classification, which results in all books pertaining to the same matter being found at one place.

In the reading room of the Bonn University Library a different consideration has created a similar classification. All natural sciences and all studies of humanity are divided into 8 groups, each of which is again sub-divided into several sub-divisions, for instance, Medicine in group No. 7: 1. General works; 2. History of medicine; 3. Anatomy; 4. Histology; 5. Physiology; 6. Surgery, etc.

To a person conversant with the respective systems, both arrangements permit a quick locating of a book. But, whereas the Decimal Classification has been introduced in a number of British University Libraries, a student in Germany, whenever he changes from one university to the other, must familiarize himself with a new kind of classification since there exists no general agreement among the libraries.

As far as I know, the Dewey Classification is not used in any German university library. Tradition and want of knowledge of this system which, once understood, would easily facilitate access to the books, has hindered its introduction. The general application of this system would prove of great advantage to students.

The newly established students' library in Bonn allows open access to all students; all the books, however, are catalogued according to 26 divisions, and each group is arranged alphabetically by the author's name. No subject grouping has been attempted. Thus, in section No. 15, concerning History, you will find a book on the French Revolution beside the History of Spain or Churchill's *Memoirs* beside the *Letters* of Donoso Cortes.

It is easy for a student to find a book if he knows its author and its title. But if he requires a book on a particular subject he may have to check over the whole group from A to Z (often containing more than a hundred titles).

Now that Germany is rebuilding her destroyed libraries, another important factor must be considered—open access to all or a part of the book shelves in any library. The system applied in Cambridge, Leeds, and partially in London and other University Libraries, enables the student to refer to a certain book on the spot. When and in what way this idea will begin to take root in Germany, remains to be seen, because even in England no final clarification has been reached on this particular question. Should there be open access to all or only some of the books? What kind of building would be most suitable? (Is the construction of an annexe or of a new building in addition to the old one more satisfactory?).

The German librarian, for his part, will miss subject catalogues in British University Libraries. Decimal Classification on the shelves cannot compensate for them. The title and subject index of the *British National Bibliography* proves this. The British university librarian must either

search his shelves or consult bibliographies for a subject approach to his stock.

As to the question of shelving the books in stacks, as on open shelves, I found many differing solutions to this problem. Normally each library has its own regulations. In Germany, too, there has been no general agreement on this subject, but for a long time the shelving of books by *numerus currens* has been common. All books are arranged continuously one beside the other, separated according to their sizes ignoring the subject matter of their contents. As far as I know, the Deutsche Bücherei in Leipzig first introduced this system.

During my three months' stay I soon became aware of the fact that England is the leading country in the field of public libraries. In Germany the Stadt und Volksbüchereien (not Stadtbibliothek) can be compared with the British Public Libraries—too little money is being invested in these institutions.

The various handbooks on British Public Libraries published by the Library Association provide good opportunities for statistical comparisons. Sometimes British librarians were incredulous when I mentioned that, with few exceptions, there is no official open access to the books in our country. The reader will find nothing but very simple catalogues. The readers themselves have no means of realizing the amount and variety of existing books because the treasure is not made visible to them. Of course they can turn over the pages of the books wanted before borrowing them, but before they can hold a certain book in their hand the library assistant has to go and take it out of the stack from wherever it stands.

The wonderful institutions of Children's Libraries with their own reading rooms as I found them repeatedly in England ought to be introduced in Germany, too. Some of these are even visiting the schools to acquaint the children with book reading.

In Germany the opening hours of libraries appear to be very limited compared with those in England. In Bonn, for instance, the following rules are applied, which do not differ significantly from those of other places: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, 11 to 12 a.m., and 4 to 7 p.m.; Saturday, 11 to 12 a.m.; Tuesday closed. Whereas the Public Libraries in London are keeping their doors open for about 50 to 60 hours per week.

The British Public Libraries are often in possession of an excellent reference department. Encyclopedias, dictionaries, works on history of literature are available to every reader and besides special literature, provide great assistance to widen his general or professional knowledge.

It is to be hoped that within the next few years a change of existing German conditions in this field will take place in order to offer the public more and better opportunities for becoming acquainted with good books. I do not think that the duty hours of the Public Libraries in Germany are limited because of lack of visitors. To me it seems as if financial reasons make these restrictions necessary and more money would probably be essential. It would be worth while to compile a comparable summary of book provision and use in our two countries, (*L.A. Record*, June, 1953, p. 203).

I hope that these pages may be the cause for further study of the relations mentioned above. After a three months' study of librarianship in England may this be my contribution. I should like to express my thanks in particular to the Library Association which enabled me to undertake my studies, and to all other helpful people I met who were always ready to give any assistance in showing me my way.

BOOKS FOR STUDENTS

LIBRARY TRENDS, v. 3, no. 3, January, 1955: *Library Associations in the United States and British Commonwealth*. (Illinois Univ. Press, \$2).

Library Trends, a quarterly publication of the University of Illinois School, concerns itself in each issue with one aspect of librarianship. The issue under review is edited by D. H. Clift, who writes the opening article on "Associations in the United States." He deals with the nine principal library associations, giving most detail about the largest and oldest of them—the American Library Association. For a British librarian, Mr. Clift's summary is of interest because it shows how similar our problems and reactions to them are:

"The evolution of policy is slow in a membership organization, and the machinery for arriving at a group decision is often cumbersome, complex and ponderous. Proposed activities, issues, and programs work their way through many units. . . There has never existed any complete agreement among the members on what should be the programs of the A.L.A. Certainly there has never been any unanimity of feeling on how well the Association conducts its affairs."

The A.L.A. has twenty-nine geographical chapters and fifteen subject divisions; the nine library associations mentioned have a total of 31,000 members.

Mr. Roy Stokes contributes the article on British Associations, giving most space to a brief history of the L.A. and its functions and following this with a useful summary of the associations of the Commonwealth.

In spite of the title of this issue of *Library Trends*, little mention is made of Commonwealth associations in the other articles. The next six contributions concern the special responsibility of library associations for publishing, the education of librarians, promoting legislation, adult education, intellectual freedom and international co-operation. Of these by far the most interesting is that of Mr. Louis Shores on "Qualifications of personnel: Training and certification." Mr. Shores contrasts the educational policy of the A.L.A. with that of the L.A., the one having placed the emphasis on the establishment of library schools and the other on the conducting of examinations and the certification of librarians.

If this sample of *Library Trends* is typical, then obviously it is a periodical which the earnest student cannot afford to miss; it is crammed with facts which can be nicely tabulated in notebooks and possibly introduced to dazzle the examiners at a later date. The reviewer who no longer has examinations to pass can only wish that contributors could be a little less dull and wordy—for example, the A.L.A.'s fight for "freedom to read" ought to have been as exciting to read about as it was important.

E. J. WILLSON.

OTTERVIK, G., MÖHLENBROCK, S., and ANDERSSON, I. *Libraries and archives in Sweden*. 1954. (Stockholm, The Swedish Institute, Kr. 10).

This efficient, comprehensive and attractively produced little book is characteristic of the library service to which it is a guide. Within the compass of 217 pages is a survey of the university and public libraries of the country and its archive collections, with an historical introduction and chapters on legal deposit, training for library service, school libraries and other special services, library co-operation and the organization of the profession; and inevitably, in such a well-mannered publication, a list of Swedish national bibliographies and an adequate index. The more important libraries are dealt with individually, rather in the manner of Harrod's *Libraries of Greater London*, with short descriptions and figures for stock, staff and issues; photographs of buildings, activities and important books are provided on a generous scale.

Parallels with library service in this country are of course many. Increasing emphasis is being laid on library co-operation ("Co-operation must aim at placing the book resources of the whole country at the disposal of every citizen"); the Stockholm Libraries Co-operation Committee parallels our own Metropolitan Chief Librarians Joint Standing Committee, and future plans for university and research libraries include a scheme for more intense subject specialization and

co-operative book purchasing. Our own difficulties in the acquisition of foreign language material (and information about it) become insignificant in the light of Sweden's very great dependence on such works, especially in the technical field. English is a second language to most Swedes, and necessarily so for the student, as a glance round the technical department of the Stockholm City Library with its host of familiar titles makes vividly apparent.

That such a book as this, in English, should have been worth producing may seem surprising; that the Swedes should have produced one need surprise nobody. We must be grateful that it is so. There is a danger of course that the mere fact that so much information is now readily available about libraries in Sweden may result in a bias in our studies and in our examinations; even that might be no bad thing.

A. C. JONES.

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION. *Books for young people, Group II: eleven to thirteen plus*. Compiled by the North Midland Branch of the Library Association under the editorship of Edgar Osborne, F.L.A. New edition, revised. 1954. 127 p. (L.A., 7s. 6d. (6s. to members)).

This list was first published in 1953 and that a second edition should be called for within a year is a deserved tribute to its compilers, and that 45 new, and good, fiction titles, nearly all published in 1953, should have been added to the list is an equally deserved tribute to the book trade. Among the regretted excisions from the previous list are Rachel Field's *Hitty* and Doris Gates' *Blue willow*, a finer book than *North Fork* which replaces it. But in other respects the fiction list is strengthened by the additions and not really weakened by the exclusions.

There are but two criticisms to be made of this otherwise excellent list; the first concerns the wide interpretation of the reading abilities and interests of children of 11 to 13 plus. Admittedly, this does range from books of the standard of Goaman's *Judy's cookery book* to Grenfell's *Nelson*, but when three lists are being published it would surely be wiser to confine entries to titles written for the average child of the ages cited and most children of 11—13 would surely find Komroff's biography of Marco Polo more suitable than Maurice Collis's, and *Our Everest adventure* (Brockhampton, 12s. 6d.) more readable than Sir John Hunt's full version of that immortal adventure.

A much more serious criticism can be levelled against the arrangement of the non-fiction entries in the list which, we are told, are in "subject order." If this list is intended for the general public, as it partly is, what can they regard as orderly about the following sequence of subjects—Myths, Citizenship, Careers, Transport, Costume, Folklore and Legends? Even the most Dewey-minded librarian must occasionally quarrel with the master, and book-lists, like book-exhibitions, can, and should, bring together related subjects such as Myths, Folklore and Legends; Transport (p. 45), Ships, Railways, Aircraft (p. 67—72). (The intervening pages are mainly filled with biology entries, not, to the lay, or indeed to any, mind, the missing link between transport and its component parts). The first three Dewey numbers are added to help the child find the book he requires on the library shelves, but this should not bind the compilers of the list to perpetuating the weaknesses of the scheme, and it is hoped that any new editions of this or other Library Association lists will be more realistic and less ritualistic in the arrangement of entries.

JOAN BUTLER.

ESDAILE ARUNDELL, *A student's manual of bibliography*, revised by Roy Stokes. 1954. 392p. (Allen & Unwin, 18s.).

The book under review is complementary to that by Norman E. Binns, published by the A.A.L., and is already well-known to students of librarianship, who will welcome this new edition, revised by Mr. Stokes.

The *Introduction to historical bibliography* does in fact fill out for the librarianship student those parts of Dr. Esdaile's indispensable *Manual* in which he has purposely kept to the basic structure of the subject, giving just enough

historical background for an understanding of the processes of analytical bibliography and the tools for its exploitation.

Dr. Esdaile has geared his book to the immediate needs of the student bibliographer: in his chapter on paper he concentrates on the varying grades of book papers and on their durability; in the one on printing it is the signatures and causes of variants which are most prominent, and "the landmarks in the history of printing and publishing" range from block books to Penguins in thirty pages. Whereas, however, his descriptions of illustration processes are brief (but sufficient for the purpose), and private presses are hardly mentioned, the chapter on binding, both historical and practical, is a classical account of book leathers and the repairing of bindings. These chapters on the "science of bibliography" serve to lead up to the "art of recording books" which is dealt with at length—the identifying and the collating, and the detailed description of books. Roughly half the book is devoted to this study of analytical and of systematic bibliography (the recording of books in such a way as to be most useful to the literary researcher), and to a guide to the main primary and secondary bibliographies in each field of knowledge.

Subjects in the *Introduction* not covered in the *Manual* are the history of publishing and bookselling down to 1850; for this the reader is referred to Mumby's *Publishing and bookselling*, a new edition of which in 1954 brings the subject right up to date. A chapter is also devoted to copyright in books. A useful chapter on the development of book trade bibliography is the nearest approach to Dr. Esdaile's survey of primary bibliographies.

ANNE PETRIDES.

CORRESPONDENCE

NATIONAL COUNCILLORS

The A.G.M. of the A.A.L. on May 4th resolved that of the (now) nine nationally elected members of the Council, three should be under thirty. This is designed to assure the Voice of Youth a hearing. May I enquire just how the voice of youth is to reach these three orifices? Is there to be an organisation created to correlate the young members of A.A.L. throughout the country and synthesise their views for the benefit of our three proletarians? Each election places these unknown and untried representatives on the Council for one year. At the end of that year they may be seeing the light as through a glass darkly, and be aware of what the Council is doing. For what purpose? Their re-election is problematical in the extreme. Meanwhile they are time consuming passengers.

The stimulus for this mock heroic resolution would appear to be that men of years and wisdom are at present

elected by overwhelming majorities of votes—those pitifully few votes returned by our now so interested youth—and that newcomers have little chance. This is said to leave power in the hands of a clique. What percentage of our membership was present at Chaucer House to force this remarkable resolution on the Council? Were there more than forms a clique? Were they representative of our Association? Would not you, one of the vast majority unable to attend this jamboree, like to know more about it, and to cast your vote? Are you convinced that your Divisional Committee is ignoring you—that is if you ever write to them, attend a meeting, or stand for election? What about a plebiscite? It would probably lead to the same result, and in any case I am all for younger members having their say, but let it be not through this farcical contrivance.

L. E. TAYLOR,

Deputy Borough Librarian, Bilston P.L.

A.A.L. CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

Students are reminded that completed application forms, together with the appropriate fees, for the courses beginning in October and November, must reach Mr. J. S. Davey, F.L.A., 49, Halstead Gardens, London, N.21, on or before 30th September, 1955, after which date no application will be considered. Earlier receipt is advisable and would be greatly appreciated.

Full particulars of the courses offered are given in the current *Students' Handbook*.

Revision Courses. A limited number of *Registration* and *Final* courses are available to run from September to

December. These short period courses are reserved exclusively for those students who have already sat the examination in the subjects required.

Completed application forms for Registration revision courses, together with the appropriate fees, must reach Mr. Davey by 31st August. Application forms for Final revision courses will be accepted up to one week after publication of the summer examination results if this is later than 31st August. *Fees.* The fee per course is £2 7s. 6d., plus 10s. extra to students in Africa, America, Asia and Australasia.

CHANGE OF HON. EDUCATION SECRETARY

As from June 1st, 1955, Mr. J. S. Davey, F.L.A., has been appointed as Hon. Education Secretary of the A.A.L. All enquiries regarding correspondence courses should now be addressed to him at 49, Halstead Gardens, London, N.21.

ROUND THE DIVISIONS — 14

YORKSHIRE

THE TITLE of the Division is a misnomer, for the Division's area comprises only two of the three Ridings of the "County of the broad acres." The North Riding forms part of the North-Eastern Division, but there is enough left to provide an active (and argumentative) body of librarians.

The East and the West Ridings differ very much in their scenery, industries, ways of living and in their libraries. The industrial West contains three great cities (Sheffield, Leeds and Bradford), and many other large ones, as well as half a hundred towns with civic pride and a grim clutch on their independence. In some areas these towns run into one another and provide contrasts in library provision between large city, small town and county branch. The agricultural East

contains only one large city, but it is Yorkshire's chief port. Apart from Hull there are only a handful of small towns in the Riding, and so the Division's area is hopelessly lopsided; any attempt to alternate meetings between the two Ridings (and the Divisional Committee has consistently attempted this theoretical balance) has meant a far higher attendance in the highly-populated western sector.

The Yorkshire Branch of the Library Assistants' Association was formed at Leeds on December 13th, 1906, and so the Division can claim to be among the seniors. The archives show that from the very inception Yorkshire lived up to its reputation for fearless criticism, high scholarship and taking itself seriously. The subject of the very first paper given in the Division was "The

THE THURLOE SERIES

*of special library
editions——ideal
for travelling
libraries*

Arts and Crafts
Cycling Tourist Guides
Electrical
Engineering
Gardening
Pets and Livestock
Modelling, etc.
Modelling, Railways
Photography
Wireless and
Television
Juveniles and
Elementary Readers

*Catalogues and Samples on
request*

OPPENHEIM & Co. Ltd.

*Library and Wholesale
Booksellers*

25, THURLOE STREET,
SOUTH KENSINGTON,
LONDON, S.W.7.

Telephone :

Kensington 6807 & 9431

THE HOLT-JACKSON BOOK COMPANY LIMITED



*Public and County
Library Booksellers*



**MONTAUBAN
CHAMBERS,
ST. ANNES-ON-SEA,
LANCS.**

Telephone: St. Annes 575



London Showroom:
59, BRITTON STREET,
CLERKENWELL ROAD, E.C.1
Telephone: Clerkenwell 3250.

Preservation of Ancient Classical Literature."

The records of the Division's activities are a fascinating series of documents; they show not only how keen were the members and how heated the discussion, but, by the impressive collection of cuttings from various newspapers, how they must have affected public opinion over the fifty years. The names of speakers are familiar to us now as we turn over the yellowing pages: from the first paper, which was given by 'Mr. James Ross, of the York Public Library,' the Division has shown an ability to scent future greatness and to demand its service.

Education has always been one of the great themes of the Divisional Committee's activities, and before the First World War we find plans being made for running classes for assistants. Since the Second War and despite financial stringency there has been an unbroken series of Week-end Schools, organised at first at Tong Hall, Sheffield, and for the last four years at

Grantley Hall, near Ripon. These schools have brought members together in restful surroundings for far from restful sessions of discussion and erudition which have attracted some of the best speakers in the country. Another regular feature of post-war years has been the pre-examination quiz, where tutors stand to be fired at and students pick up the last minute wrinkle which (they always hope) will just tip the scales.

In fifty years the meetings, held usually five times per year, have scoured the county for subjects of interest. Parties have visited factories, ports, binderies, churches—and sometimes libraries—and the county's literary shrines have received regular pilgrimages.

The membership at the moment is 400. Shortage of money has handicapped the Division in many of its ideas, but with such a noble history, with Yorkshire grit and with a belief in the uses of the A.A.L., the future is . . . the future.

Berkshire Bookbinding Co., Ltd.

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS

NON - FICTION AND
REFERENCE BINDINGS
ARE OUR SPECIALITY

**27, ELDON TERRACE
READING, BERKS.**

Telephone: Reading 60688.

500

Public Libraries in the British
Isles now subscribe to

KEESING'S

CRAMERS for MUSIC

MUSICAL LITERATURE
AND MUSIC BINDING

**139, New Bond Street
London, W.1**

★ Special Music Enquiry Bureau

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 48. No. 8

AUGUST, 1955



EDITORIAL

IT HAS BEEN ARGUED with some force that a library periodical is not the place for literary criticism. That an assistant—at least in a general library—should be knowledgeable about contemporary literature is conceded; that librarians, who presumably read at least the literary newspapers if not the more esoteric journals can usefully add anything to the views of the professional critics has been questioned. But in this as in so many other spheres the need of the librarian as a public servant is different from his need as a reader. His time is limited, and his opinions of much of his stock are necessarily acquired at secondhand. A review of the work of a particular author, or of some small corner of the vast field of literature might well prove useful in stimulating his own reading and critical thought, and in providing, however inadequately, a basis of knowledge about authors and titles as yet unfamiliar.

We hope, therefore, to publish from time to time articles of this nature in the *Assistant Librarian*. Gerald Cotton, joint compiler of the *Fiction Index*, writes in this issue on Thomas Wolfe, and we shall be very glad to receive further contributions from readers. Correspondence arising from the articles will be particularly welcomed.

* * * *

We publish in this issue a letter from the Chairman of the North Western Branch of the Library Association, announcing the inauguration of a Charles Nowell Memorial Fund, to provide an annual award to an outstanding student in the North West. We feel sure that our very many members who have reason to be grateful to Mr. Nowell, however indirectly, for his work on their behalf, will respond generously to Miss Downton's invitation.

Members might like at the same time to be reminded of the loan facilities available to them through that other fund, established by the Library Association as a memorial to the work of Lt.-Col. J. M. Mitchell. Loans of "about £25" are available from the Mitchell Memorial Fund to facilitate attendance at courses in preparation for the Registration Examination at full-time Schools of Librarianship. Full details may be obtained from the L.A. Education Officer.

CHANGE OF HON. EDUCATION SECRETARY

As from June 1st, 1955, Mr. J. S. Davey, F.L.A., has been appointed Hon. Education and Sales Officer of the A.A.L. All enquiries regarding correspondence courses should now be addressed to him at 49, Halstead Gardens, London, N.21.

A.A.L. OFFICIAL NOTICES

OFFICERS OF THE A.A.L., 1955

PRESIDENT: J. S. Bristow, F.L.A., Central Library, Croydon.

VICE-PRESIDENT: W. Tynemouth, F.L.A., Central Library, Newcastle upon Tyne.

HON. SECRETARY: E. E. Moon, F.L.A., Central Library, Chiswick, W.4.

HON. TREASURER: W. S. Hudson, F.L.A., Central Library, Kensington, W.8.

HON. EDITOR: A. C. Jones, F.L.A., Central Library, Hornsey, N.8.

HON. SOLICITORS: Messrs. Metcalfe, Copeman & Pettefar,
3 and 4, Clement's Inn, W.C.2.

OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL:

ASSISTANT HON. TREASURER: H. G. HOLLOWAY, A.L.A., Central Library,
Eastbourne.

HON. EDUCATION AND SALES OFFICER: J. S. DAVEY, F.L.A., 49, Halstead Gardens,
London, N.21.

HON. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: W. F. BROOME, F.L.A., Central Library,
Lambeth, S.W.2.

ASSISTANT HON. SECRETARY: R. G. SURRIDGE, F.L.A., North Finchley Library,
Finchley, N.12.

All enquiries about correspondence courses and orders for A.A.L. publications should be addressed to the Hon. Education and Sales Officer.

Subscription orders for the *Assistant Librarian* and enquiries about advertising rates and space should be addressed to the Hon. Treasurer.

Manuscripts and letters for publication, preferably typed and double-spaced, should be sent to the Hon. Editor. No payment is made for articles published in the *Assistant Librarian*.

Distribution of the *Assistant Librarian* is arranged by Divisional Hon. Secretaries in conjunction with the Hon. Membership Secretary. Enquiries about distribution should be addressed to local Divisional Secretaries.

Enquiries relating to membership should be sent to the Hon. Membership Secretary.

All other enquiries to the Hon. Secretary.

A.A.L. CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

Students are reminded that completed application forms, together with the appropriate fees, for the courses beginning in October and November, must reach Mr. J. S. Davey, F.L.A., 49, Halstead Gardens, London, N.21, on or before 30th September, 1955, after which date no application will be considered. Earlier receipt is advisable and would be greatly appreciated.

Full particulars of the courses offered are given in the current *Students' Handbook*.

Revision Courses. A limited number of *Registration* and *Final* courses are available to run from September to

December. These short period courses are reserved exclusively for those students who have already sat the examination in the subjects required.

Completed application forms for *Registration* revision courses, together with the appropriate fees, must reach Mr. Davey by 31st August. Application forms for *Final* revision courses will be accepted up to one week after publication of the summer examination results if this is later than 31st August.

Fees. The fee per course is £2 7s. 6d., plus 10s. extra to students in Africa, America, Asia and Australasia.

TALKING ABOUT READING

THOMAS WOLFE

by G. B. COTTON

THOMAS CLAYTON WOLFE was born in Asheville, North Carolina, in 1900, and died after a sudden bout of pneumonia 38 years later in Baltimore. Despite his early death, his literary attainments were such that he has long been a legend in his own country, though he has not until recently become generally known on this side of the Atlantic.

His first novel, *Look homeward angel*, appeared in 1929, and is chronologically first in a series of four books which are his monument. The book is to a very large degree autobiographical, and tells of the growing up of Eugene Gant among his family in Altamont, Old Catawba, which is readily recognisable as Asheville, North Carolina. The members of Eugene's family—the Bible-quoting, drunken and rhetorical father, vast and grandiloquent in all his undertakings and failings, is in reality Wolfe's own father; the mother, folksy and curious in the way of the mountain people of the area, an ex-school teacher, thrifty almost to the degree of miserliness, is Wolfe's own mother. All the children of the family, with the exception of Daisy, who is a completely fictional character, have their counterparts among Wolfe's own brothers and sisters.

The story tells of Eugene's birth, of his gradually developing experiences through childhood, of his education and youth and first love affair, ending with Eugene at the State University, with the death of his revered brother Ben and the impending departure of his father to the sanatorium in Baltimore. The constant background is the fantastic family compounded of the Gants (on the father's side) and the Pentlands (on the mother's side). To a large extent William Gant and Eliza Pentland represent their clans, the one big and full of vision, larger-than-life in everything it attempts; the other prosaic, wary, businesslike, its horizons bounded by the great mountains which bred it. Eugene, as the youngest member of the family, and a sensitive lad, is early torn in his loyalties, admiring the braggadocio of his father (for he, too, is embryonically large and omnivorous in his appetite for life), and feeling real affection for his mother, who suffers through the defections, drunken and sexual, of her husband. And from them both Eugene inherits fine qualities, qualities which mature and guide him as he himself develops in age and experience. A key scene in this novel is that in which Mrs. Gant loses her son Grover—"Twelve years and twenty days old"—in St. Louis during her first and only desertion of her husband. His mother's injunction to Eugene at that time: "Poor child! Poor child! We must try to love one another," remains rooted in Eugene's inner consciousness throughout his life, to provide the sympathy, compassion and understanding which mark the later chapters of his odyssey.

This understanding is a twofold development. On the one hand it embraces a continually developing awareness of the human and social scene; on the other, through a series of significant incidents scattered through the four works which we shall discuss, it reveals itself in a sharpened perception of the worth of individual acquaintanceships. *Look homeward, angel* provides the first of these in Eugene's relationship with Mr. Leonard, whose school he attends for four years before moving on to the university. It does not take long for Eugene to see through the shallow make-up of his mentor, whom he describes as "a

bearer of the torch at noon, an apologist for the toleration of ideas that have been established for fifty years." And so, in his mind, Eugene rejects him, as he is to reject others on successively higher levels during his career.

It is impossible to leave this first novel without reference to Eugene's relationship with his oldest brother Ben. Ben is his idol, the only one of the family group with whom Eugene is completely at ease. His death towards the end of the novel marks Eugene's impending severance of home, but the certitude of this is delayed until the very last scene of the book, when Ben reappears, either in fact or hallucination, in the town square, and Eugene realises that the angel in his father's stonecutter's yard—the angel of the title of the book—is no longer the symbol of his homesickness.

In *Of time and the river* (1935), Eugene leaves his Southern home for graduate work at Harvard, where the scope of his intense romantic appetite for experience is broadened. Here he reads, studies play-writing, and cultivates a wide circle of acquaintances, including Francis Starwick, a cultured, fastidious and affected scholar—the second major personality whom Eugene is later to discard. Eugene achieves a limited success as a dramatist before he leaves for a brief visit home, where his father dies after a long and terrible illness. From now on the mantle of Gant senior, always the dominant personality of the first book, passes on to his son, who in spite of occasional bouts of despair and frustration (possibly in his efforts to assimilate the river-tide of knowledge and experience in too short a time), gradually builds upon the constructive aspect of his father's character and eschews the destructive. He goes north again, this time to serve as a college instructor of English in New York City, and undertakes a European tour, during which he meets Starwick again. The discovery of his friend's homosexual dissipation disgusts him, and he returns to the United States.

The next pair of novels to a considerable degree retrace the same ground as the first, but they are written by a maturing artist. The first of these new novels, *The web and the rock* (1939), has as its central character, George "Monk" Webber. George is, of course, Eugene, or Thomas Wolfe, all over again, in his restlessness, his introspection, his physical appearance. But this time the careful documentation of the Wolfe family is missing. The title indicates symbolically the web of experience, environment and ancestry in which the hero is snared, and his attempt to escape by finding the rock which is the original strength and beauty of vision of his father. Arriving in New York from Old Catawba, George, the young college instructor and writer, enters into a love affair with Esther Jack (to whom we are introduced briefly in the last few pages of *Of time and the river*). *You can't go home again* (1940), deals with George's life after his return to the United States from Continental journeyings; his continuing romance with Esther Jack; his success in writing novels; his relationships with (a) a famous but disillusioned novelist; and (b) his editor Fox (in real life Maxwell E. Perkins, of the editorial staff of Charles Scribner's Sons). In due course these become the third, fourth and fifth of the key characters whom Eugene is to discard—Esther because she is doomed to live for ever by the shallow and effete standards of the literary society of New York; McHarg (the novelist) because in private life he is given to a drunken prostration which is the complete antithesis to the strident, virile note which he strikes in his writings; Fox because he urges Eugene to "swim with the tide," to abandon his newly-found objective social satire and relapse into his old subjective style. The end of this book, which marks

the end of Wolfe's saga, is written on a note of lyrical optimism which succinctly expresses the philosophy of Wolfe, Eugene and George. We have seen his experience broaden from the home environment described in *Look homeward, angel* to the wider world of *Of time and the river*, some reiteration of the first theme in *The web and the rock*, and finally his awakening social conscience in *You can't go home again*, the symbols of his increasing awareness of the intrinsic in society being the five key relationships with Leonard, Starwick, Esther, McHarg and Fox. Now he ends his thesis: "To lose the earth you know, for greater knowing; to lose the life you have, for greater life; to leave the friends you loved, for greater loving; to find a land more kind than home, more large than earth. Wherever the pillars of this earth are founded, toward which the conscience of the world is tending—a wind is rising, and the rivers flow."

Critical opinion on Wolfe is sharply divided. To me he has always appeared to be the modern embodiment of the American dream—the ideal which is never far beneath the surface of the sincere and thoughtful American. And sincere and thoughtful Americans are far more numerous than some of our political newspapers would have us suppose. Something of the classical framework of Homer is in these four books, poured on to paper with the optimism of a Whitman, with literary antecedents in Joyce, Dreiser and Mencken. If the first pair of novels burst upon us with incredible power and imagery, the author's mastery of evocation in the second pair is no less potent, and in addition the descriptions of the shoddy morality of the twenties, the evils of big business, the desperation of the depression and the horror of Nazi Germany reveal an incipient social satirist of remarkable power and compassion. William Faulkner, asked recently by a *Time* correspondent whom he considered to be the foremost twentieth century American novelist, stated that in his opinion the palm must go to Wolfe, because he attempted something which in the range of its conception and the extent of its canvas far transcended the imaginative limits of his contemporaries. Be that as it may, one thing is certain: no study of the twentieth century American novel is complete if its author omits an analysis of the work of Thomas Wolfe, representing as it does a pilgrimage in search of an enduring faith by a man who recognizes that a corrupt society destroys each individual in it, but who nevertheless believes that "the true fulfilment of our spirit, of our people, of our mighty and immortal land is yet to come."

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

I—WORKS BY THOMAS WOLFE

- Look homeward, angel: a story of the buried life. 1929.
- Of time and the river: a legend of man's hunger in his youth. 1935.
- From death to morning. 1935.
- The story of a novel. 1936.
- A note on experts. 1939.
- The face of a nation: poetical passages from the writings of Thomas Wolfe. 1939.
- The web and the rock. 1939.
- You can't go home again. 1940.
- Gentlemen of the press. 1942.
- The hills beyond. 1943.
- Letters to his mother, Julia Elizabeth Wolfe. 1943.
- A stone, a leaf, a door: poems. 1945.

The portable Thomas Wolfe (published in England as *Selections from the works of Thomas Wolfe*). 1946.

Mannerhouse: a play in a prologue and three acts. 1948.

The years of wandering in many lands and cities. 1949.

A Western journal: a daily log of the Great Parks trip, June 20th—July 2nd, 1938. 1951.

The correspondence of Thomas Wolfe and Homer Andrew Watt. 1954.

II—WORKS ABOUT THOMAS WOLFE.

Johnson, Pamela Hansford. Thomas Wolfe: a critical study. 1947.

Muller, Herbert J. Thomas Wolfe. 1947.

Walser, Richard, *editor*. The enigma of Thomas Wolfe: biographical and critical selections. 1953.

Pollock, Thomas Clark, and Cargill, Oscar. Thomas Wolfe at Washington Square. 1954.

This list does not include periodical articles or items published as part of other works. A full description of the works listed is given in:

Swinton and Pendlebury Public Libraries. Thomas Wolfe: an annotated bibliography of separately-published items in the stock of Swinton and Pendlebury Libraries. With a new introduction. 2nd edition, August, 1955.

A.A.L. DANCE.

The Liverpool and District Division is holding a Dance at the Royal Hotel, Southport, on Thursday, 22nd September (during the L.A. Conference Week), 8 p.m. till midnight. Dance tickets may be obtained from the A.A.L. Publications stand at the

Conference or on application to the Hon. Secretary. Price 3s. 6d. Refreshments available. Dress optional.

E. K. WILSON,

Hon. Secretary.

Art Library, William Brown Street,
Liverpool, 3.

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR BINDING

FICTION

In Full Rexine with new reinforced unsewn binding our "Standard Fiction Binding" is the most economic in the country.

JUVENILE "FLATS"

We can solve the problems of this class of work with an almost unbreakable binding that has been proved in Libraries, and that we have evolved for all flat ephemeral work at a reasonable price.

NON FICTION AND MUSIC

A rexine spine with waterproof cloth plus a new and greatly improved joint will give hard and long wear to all volumes at a very moderate range of prices.

We will be very happy to rebind any volumes published in any unsewn binding other than spiral bindings.

We must emphasise that we guarantee all work undertaken by us in any process against fair wear and tear and Library usage

ALL ENQUIRIES WELCOME AT
BENLOCK LIMITED

SOUTH BANK · MIDDLESBROUGH · YORKS.

A VIEW OF THE FINAL EXAMINATION

by LEONARD E. TAYLOR, *Deputy Borough Librarian, Bilston.*

THE PERSISTENT denigration of L.A. examinations denotes a basis of criticism firmer than simple exam-examinee friction. It emphasises in particular that the Final examination neither produces librarians nor provides an accurate assessment of abilities: it produces only examinees, successful or otherwise. Those people remarkable by passing several parts of Final in few months, by private study, serve usefully to underline the fact that this examination can usually be passed on a minimum of knowledge.

Administration, with Cataloguing and Classification, involves two correspondence courses concurrently, twenty lessons in about thirteen months, made necessary by the imposition of an artificial barrier to taking parts separately. Yet why should this be so? Is there any valid reason other than the possible mistake of having an autonomous Examinations Committee? Surely examiners and promoters of our status would welcome the idea of a complete course for each individual part, bringing with it better opportunities to study adequately and examine thoroughly. One cannot take seriously the suggestion that, if exams were made more easily accessible, then grants to attend library schools would become scarce, leading perhaps to disaster for the schools. Grant committees are sane, despite student opinion, and realise that school tuition is without match.

One cannot hope to persuade examinees to more than is strictly necessary preparation, but what is strictly necessary is open to debate. If this basis of the strictly necessary be accepted as synonymous with that which can be purposively used—a fundamental prerequisite of any rational examination policy—then the Fellowship is open to common sense improvement. Compare the number of candidates for Historical Bibliography with that for Advanced Cataloguing and Classification. The reason for the popularity of the former needs little seeking—one course, the bare minimum again. But the practical usefulness of Cat and Class over Bibliography, for the everyday work of the vast majority of librarians, is very obvious.

In such text books and journals as we suffer, much emphasis is placed upon the need to be abreast of current developments in all fields. The spearhead of our attack on this problem is formed by the specialist librarians, wherever they be employed (and there are many in public libraries). Far from realising this we seem, as a body, to ignore the plea for recognition of these increasingly important members, not least in syllabi and examinations. Could we not learn something of value from the policy underlying the General Certificate of Education arrangements? Is there something wrong or evil in the idea of gaining a Fellowship on the basis of, say, two papers at advanced level (over present standards) and two or three at an ordinary (present) level? By the time a competent librarian of experience comes to tackle Fellowship it is not too much to expect that he has a reasonable idea of his future interests, and he should be able to gain an examination qualification based upon those interests and placing them at a high standard, with a general background of knowledge ensured by ordinary level passes. We might then be able to say that a Fellow, having gained advanced level passes in the subjects of his choice, really knew what he was talking about, and had not merely passed on a minimum qualification throughout his examinations.

An interesting sidelight appears on page 92 of *The Assistant* for May, 1955.

RETURN MATCH

READERS OF THE *December Assistant* will have noted how, last year, Sheffield's staff association lured the unsuspecting representatives of G.L.D. northwards under pretext of showing them Manor Branch Library; and thrashed them at cricket. Well, of course, Eric Moon wasn't going to let us get away with it as easily as that. "You come to London next year," he said. "We haven't any libraries worth seeing, but we'll find a cricket ground . . . and the beer's not bad . . ."

Undeterred by the prospect of meeting the full strength of G.L.D. on its own ground, we set sail southward on the first fine Saturday for weeks. Lack of London weighting denies us the luxury of private cars, and we travelled in a communal 29-seater. The journey down was uneventful; a veritable doldrum before the ensuing storm.

Half-an-hour before schedule, Marylebone Town Hall loomed on London's limited horizon, and one member of the reception committee was already present. Thence away, some to be wined, some dined; others to imbibe the culture of the metropolis—or even to discuss librarianship. Rumour has it that the largest party left a certain hostelry sooner than had been their original intention. This, for the sake of propriety, if not of accuracy, must be denied.

Now, for some reason not at first comprehended by us stolid northerners, our captain, secretary and scorer had been billeted together. Let their host remain anonymous—we shall call him "Smith." But as meal followed meal with startling rapidity, the plot unfolded. By Sunday mid-day, Sheffield's three most important men lay fuddled and helpless, unable to move, or even think clearly. To cut a longish story shorter, they were late. The skipper lost his opportunity to use his double-headed penny; Ron Surridge for G.L.D., used his double-tailed two-bob piece instead and decided to bat. Moreover, the score was already into double figures when the three arrived, and our scorer was too late to argue about it.

On what was described at the time as "a Yorkshire pudding of a wicket," Sheffield bowled well (by their standards), but not well enough, and their fielding was non-existent. London amassed 107 runs and then completed our discomfort by stuffing us with more food. From then on it was a case of how few runs Sheffield could get. Batsman No. 1 misjudged the length of Eric Moon's arm and was accordingly run out; No. 2 holed out in one; No. 3 thought a straight ball was on the leg side. And so on. Appropriately enough, Charlie Taylor—who started all this business—got most of our meagre total of 46 all out. Our demoralisation was complete. Southern subtlety had triumphed over northern tenacity. Revenge was sweet.

Thence homeward, after doing a Cook's tour to deposit members of the "G.L.D." team in various villages in Hertford, Hereford, Cheshire, etc. The return journey was a little livelier than that of the previous day, but everybody remained cold sober, which just goes to show how philosophically we Yorkshiremen take defeat—even at cricket.

DEAN HARRISON, *Sheffield P.L.*

CORRESPONDENCE

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

I have never been more distressed in my life, nor more angry, than when I read the Presidential Address in the June number of the *Assistant Librarian*, and found myself so shamefully misquoted therein. The G.L.D. Annual General Meeting in question was the first occasion upon which I have ever had the temerity to speak; it will certainly be my last, as I do not now ever intend to run the risk of being misunderstood again. May I please try to vindicate my name and endeavour to straighten out my words which have been so cruelly twisted?

So far as I can remember, at this particular meeting certain speakers had said in no uncertain terms that special librarians should be booted out of the Library Association and be made to join ASLIB. I remember feeling so incensed about this that I found myself standing on my feet and replying that this was most unfair to the assistant in the special library and that if I and my colleagues were sufficiently interested in the library world to want to become chartered librarians, why should membership of the L.A. be denied to us merely because we happened to work in a special and not a public library. Any undue stress on examinations was no doubt due to the fact that the unpleasant things loom large in the life of any student—it was certainly not from any joy experienced in sitting them! How could there be any point in becoming a chartered librarian and not being a member of the L.A., it would seem an absurd state of affairs, and I can think of no professional body, which is also an examining body, where such a strange arrangement exists.

Lastly, I should like to protest strongly against the quite erroneous views ascribed to me about library co-operation, all the more astonishing as it has always been something of a

hobby-horse of mine that there should be the closest liaison between all kinds of libraries, for the good of all. In the course of my duties at the War Office Library, many enquiries from public libraries come my way, and this is an aspect of my work which I particularly enjoy. I also enjoy the activities of the Reference and Special Libraries Section for the same reason.

As I have questioned several of my colleagues who were present at the meeting, to whom my meaning seems to have been perfectly clear, I am at a loss to understand how my few poor words can have suffered such maltreatment. Can it be that Mr. Bristow indulged in a little wishful thinking in order to ride his own hobby-horse with the greater bravado?

DAPHNE M. JEPSON,
Assistant, War Office Library.

[Reference to p. 104 of our June issue will show that Miss Jepson is mistaken in thinking that any views about library co-operation were ascribed to her by the President.—Hon. Ed.]

There is supposed to be no smoke without fire, and until I read the current issue of the assistant, I thought of that as one of those broad statements roughly true. I hope assistants will not be misled into seeing fire where there is none.

Mr. Bristow's statement, italicized and exclamation-marked, "*Your Association is in danger!*" is one of the silliest parts of an address not notable otherwise for its wisdom or its statesmanship. I have been a member of the Library Association Council for ten years, A.A.L. representative on the Council for six years before that, and a member of the Executive for seven years, and I never remember during the whole of that time any serious suggestion being made of the demise, either by murder or suicide, of the A.A.L. I challenge Mr. Bristow or anyone

else to produce any document, minute, or report to the L.A. Council which does make any such suggestion. I played a small part in the defeat of the L.A. proposals in 1938, and my own impression is that both sides in that dispute realized that we have more to do as a profession than waste our time in internecine quarrels.

Mr. Hutchings made a speech. Mr. Hutchings is Treasurer of the L.A. But Mr. Hutchings is an individual also, and so far his views are his own. He has not placed these views before the L.A. for discussion.

Nor has Mr. Bristow yet placed his own views before the A.A.L. (or so I suppose), and no one is going around saying the A.A.L. intends to set up as a separate association. Before he does put those views, he might take pause to think that if the L.A. owes a lot to the A.A.L., the reverse is also true. Just one example only. What other Association of this size has its membership fee collected for it and remitted in the form of a single cheque? Any Treasurer of a small association will realize what a difference that makes in labour and stability. Could the A.A.L. run itself so cheaply if it hadn't that advantage? Would its membership be so large if membership didn't just mean a tick on a piece of paper?

Fortunately, such considerations are not yet practical ones. I hope they never will be, for there never was a time when unity of the Library profession was so important. If we can speak with one voice, a bigger voice; if we can pool all our separate talents, then we can achieve better personal status, better professional status, and better libraries, which is what we are here for. The A.A.L.—L.A. relationship, untidy though it is, is a workable partnership to the advantage of both, and may it long continue.

The Editor of the *London Librarian* this morning displays a common sense that is heartening. I should like to see his leading article given wider circulation, since his views are those I think of most of us.

F. M. GARDNER,
Borough Librarian, Luton.

THE FUTURE OF THE A.A.L.

Let us agree to face one unpleasant fact—the Library Association is of *no importance whatsoever*. It carries no weight with our employers, and has almost lost the confidence and loyalty of its younger members because of its unwillingness to soil its delicate fingers with sordid trivialities like salaries and conditions of service—the apparent attitude of chief librarians has already been pointed out by another correspondent. To leave all negotiations with our employers in the hands of NALGO is an intolerable dereliction of duty and tantamount to professional suicide. We do not recruit for our profession from among the same type of person as other branches of local administration—indeed, our chief competitor is probably teaching, a profession which offers higher pay, longer holidays, a higher social standing and a professional association which is constantly striving to better the lot of its members. In addition, we cannot help but feel that we are too small a minority to make our special needs known through as large and all-embracing an organisation as NALGO; consequently, there is a generally cynical attitude towards the Library Association, which seems to do nothing for our material well-being, and apathy towards NALGO in which we feel we are bound to be swamped by other groups of local government officers.

The future existence of the A.A.L. may depend largely on whether it is prepared to take a more positive attitude than its parent body and press for our recognition as an independent profession in all negotiations with employers, or whether it intends joining the Library Association in its ivory tower. We assistants need some organisation like that formed by our chiefs to protect their interests; we need a resolute, vigorous and vigilant professional association which will not think the material needs of its members beneath its dignity to consider—the A.A.L. could be the nucleus of that association, and, if needs be, independent of the Library Association. The

THE THURLOE SERIES

*of special library
editions——ideal*

*for travelling
libraries*

Arts and Crafts
Cycling Tourist Guides
Electrical
Engineering
Gardening
Pets and Livestock
Modelling, etc.
Modelling, Railways
Photography
Wireless and
Television
Juveniles and
Elementary Readers

*Catalogues and Samples on
request*

OPPENHEIM & Co. Ltd.

*Library and Wholesale
Booksellers*

25, THURLOE STREET,
SOUTH KENSINGTON,
LONDON, S.W.7.

Telephone :
Kensington 6807 & 9431

THE HOLT-JACKSON BOOK COMPANY LIMITED



*Public and County
Library Booksellers*



MONTAUBAN
CHAMBERS,
ST. ANNES-ON-SEA,
LANCS.

Telephone: St. Annes 575



London Showroom:
59, BRITTON STREET,
CLERKENWELL ROAD, E.C.1
Telephone: Clerkenwell 3250.

Library Association could then become in theory what it is already in practice to most of us—just an examining body, which might then largely support itself by charging higher examination fees so that we are no longer forced to pay much-begrudged subscriptions to an association which has shut its eyes to reality and ignores the most urgent problems of the majority of its members.

L. E. MILTON,
Assistant, Kent Co.L.

[Intending correspondents on this theme would be well advised to refer again to the letters of Messrs. E. W. Moxey and G. E. Haslam (*Assistant Librarian*, Feb., 1953) to avoid going once more over familiar ground.—Hon. Ed.].

DISPLAY AND DISPLAYS.

I smouldered when the A.A.L. decision to publish an annotated catalogue with a chapter on display work instead of a Display Manual was announced to G.L.D. Committee. I absolutely burn with protest at Mr. Francis's letter in the *June Assistant*.

Taking Mr. Francis's letter first, I suggest he learns the difference between display and displays. Classification of books is one orderly method of display. I suggest the public have sampled this method long enough to get lost in the maze. It is now time for us to help them out. Economists have for a long time known about particular vantage points which will draw attention to themselves because of their situation. These I believe are commonly called "hot spots," and they are fully recognized by the managers of the self-service grocery stores. It is time for libraries to wake up and use such facilities for helping the public to help themselves. Mr. Francis talks about a Reader's Librarian; but to what percentage of the borrowers can he be an adviser? The majority come in to help themselves. We have not the time or the staff to help every borrower, so we limit personal service to those who know what they want (be it a subject, title, author, or only a

vague idea). Those who only want "a book" usual get no personal service. Display and displays can help us to help the public. Can we afford to do without them?

I am still very disappointed that the Display Manual envisaged at Birmingham will in fact be little more than a glorified catalogue. The Americans are so good at manuals. I had hoped we would be able to produce something worthy of G.O. Ward's *Publicity for Public Libraries*. I shall of course look forward to the catalogue. Perhaps the unanswered questions will be enough to fill a manual.

MARION WILDEN-HART,
*Branch Librarian, Pinner Branch,
Middlesex Co. L.*

[Miss Wilden-Hart smoulders unnecessarily. As reported in our May issue, the suggestion of a "Primer of Display Work and Publicity" was not enthusiastically supported at Birmingham. It was in fact narrowly rejected at the final general session, but on the President's ruling it was nevertheless referred for further consideration to the Press and Publications Committee. The Committee's view seems to have been much the same as that of the Conference.—Hon. Ed.].

CHARLES NOWELL MEMORIAL FUND.

The Council of the North-Western Branch of the Library Association feel that some lasting tribute should be paid to the memory of the late Charles Nowell.

Many projects have been discussed, and our final decision, which is to inaugurate an annual award to an outstanding student in the North-West has been influenced by Mr. Nowell's great and lasting interest in professional education.

Whilst this memorial is, in the first instance, a North-West project, it has been felt that Mr. Nowell's many friends throughout the profession might wish to pay their tribute to his memory by being associated with it, and I am, therefore, appealing to all who are sympathetic towards this

suggestion to send a contribution to Mr. Alan Longworth, F.L.A., Hon. Treasurer, North-Western Branch of the Library Association, The Public Library, Peel Park, Salford.

JANE A. DOWNTON,
*President, North-Western Branch,
Library Association.*

PERIODICALS FOR DISPOSAL.

I have for disposal as gifts the following unbound periodicals:—

Library Assistant, 1928-40, 1947-50.

Library Association Record, 1932-40, 1945-50.

A.A.L. Greater London Division
News, 1952-54.

Unesco Bulletin, 1947-50.

British Book News, 1946, 1947 and 1948.

If any Library or Library School is in need of individual numbers of these periodicals to make up sets and would care to let me have a note, I will do my best to supply them. Should more than one request be received for the same number, I will endeavour to make an equitable distribution; but to enable me to reply to enquirers, may I ask that a stamped and addressed envelope be sent with requests?

A. R. HEWITT,

*Secretary/Librarian, Univ. of London
Institute of Commonwealth Studies,
27, Russell Square, London, W.C.1.*

[An almost complete run of the N.B.L. journal, *Books*, 1945-1954, is also available on application to the Hon. Editor].

JUNIOR ASSISTANTS?

The art of controversy has many facets; one of them, despised by those who have confidence in their point of view, is cheap personal abuse irrelevant to the subject. I do not propose to join Mr. Moon on the ground he has chosen: I can only wonder that he has time to waste inventing these comic allegations. Your readers will, of course, have observed that Mr. Moon does not attempt to bring any evidence against either of my criticisms; and if they care to look at the references attached to the paper beginning on

page 69 of the L.A. Conference Proceedings, 1954, they will find an example of what I deprecate as bad professional practice.

D. J. FOSKETT,
*Information Officer, the Metal Box
Co., Ltd.*

[This correspondence is now closed.
—Hon. Ed.].

PRIMER OF WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.

May I reply to Miss C. D. Stewart's challenge to English children's librarians? I am glad that there are fifty librarians in Toronto alone who could undertake the work. Fifty children's libraries in England would cover a most extensive area!

There are a number of excellent and experienced children's librarians who I am sure would be well satisfied to have the leisure to sit down and write such a primer. The operative word is "leisure"—something the children's librarian rarely has within or without working hours. There is usually only one fully qualified librarian per borough, whatever its size (that is, where they are enlightened enough to appoint one). When she is not administering the junior library or libraries she is occupied in giving talks to local bodies or schools, doing extension work, organizing special activities, giving lectures, preparing booklists, and keeping well up-to-date with all new books, the latter job frequently done in "leisure time." We have in this country neither the amount of children's librarians (barely 250 in the British Isles) nor the time to work on such a primer. Work with young people is still a young plant here, and until people have different ideas as to the value of the children's librarian to the library users of the future and the community as a whole, the young plant will be slow to achieve maturity.

LEONIE E. TATTERSALL,
Children's Librarian, Coventry P.L.

[Nevertheless it is pleasant to be able to report two offers to undertake such a task as a result of the invitation in our June issue.—Hon. Ed.].

REFORMER'S NIGHTMARE

H. A. WHATLEY,

Assistant Lecturer, Glasgow School of Librarianship.

IT HAPPENED the night after we had been arguing about the nationalisation of libraries. The local branch had put on a debate and the speeches had poured out so fast and furiously for a time that one nearly lost track of one's own views. (I take it that a librarian attends a professional meeting in order to hear people say things which support his own beliefs. If no one does, then, of course, he rises and says them to convince himself).

Not having had enough, Jake, Muriel and I continued to chunter all the way across town, and I can only presume that a rather larger measure of cheese than I can assimilate comfortably must have given rise to the following nightmare. (Looked at for the recipe, you will find the best bits of Adams, Kenyon, McColvin, Joeckel, Winslow, Vollans, Ranganathan, Filon, and Ashby, put into a hot oven and baked until more than duff brown).

Whether for or against state control, we found the universal obstacle was lack of money. "Easy," said Muriel, "get state aid and your funds will be nearly doubled" (Jensen, Halmstad, and Gardner). "Not it," I said; "have to get a Government department first. Compare the growth of education between 1832 and now. Nothing then, millions to-day. Pity we missed the 'bus in 1850, 1919 and ever since."

The scene faded and my friends with it. Next I seemed to be in some library utopia. Whether it was 1985, I could not tell. The Ministry of Information and Libraries (MIL) had been established by Act of Parliament as a direct result of the valuable services rendered to industry by information and documentation centres and special libraries. Over a hundred years of public libraries counted for naught, it seemed. Remember how the 1919 P.L. Act was promoted by an outside body? However, public libraries benefited enormously from MIL, as we shall see. A handful of the largest public libraries had gone on from the commercial and technical libraries of World War I to much greater development following World Wars II and III, and had won recognition and the support of the business world.

MIL meant the co-ordination of all library services. Libraries of all kinds were regrouped independently of local government boundaries on a more practical basis to serve industry first from nodal points of business concentration. Libraries were no longer attached to education; the old apronstrings had been cut for ever. State grants were provided according to sums raised locally (following Scandinavian practice). And because industry itself helped so much to swell the local total, finances soared. At once Britain leapt into the front as having the most efficiently run library service in the world. County and urban services ceased to duplicate effort uneconomically; they were amalgamated; subject specialisation was applied easily on a regional basis; RLB had funds and staff not only to bring union catalogues up to date, but also to become bibliographical centres in the full meaning of the words. Special libraries had doubled and trebled in numbers and were making great use of the regional reference libraries (RRL) housed in the great public libraries of the country. Some of these were also the bibliographical centres. Thus these libraries became hives of industry of another kind; new departments

and extensions had to be built to cater for the volume of work that was now the daily norm. Telephones hummed with enquiries, teletypewriters and facsimile transmission were commonplace, photoduplication, translation, abstracting and indexing services formed a large part of the work performed.

While obviously industry and the country gained most from these developments, the general public enjoyed a far better library service than they do at present. The additional funds permitted expansion to cover all media of communication. Many new buildings were erected replacing obsolete mausolea. New plans included rooms for radio, television, film, music, discussion, and for young people to do their homework. In other cases, redundant cinemas were adapted, but mainly as deposit centres for the storage of the lesser-used materials. That ancient barrier, the counter, was removed entirely from the lending library and placed in the entrance hall (Frederiksberg Plan and San Diego). The public had grown accustomed to the two grades of library worker—the counter clerks and the readers' advisers. The adviser, by his knowledge, skill and resourcefulness, had won readers' approval and was now thought of as "my librarian" just as one speaks of "my doctor" or "my lawyer." Materials of all kinds, book and non-book, a clipping, a pamphlet, a report, a periodical, a photocopy, were readily available for home use. Other material was easily obtained through the RRL and mailed to readers or delivered personally the same day as received.

Staff had been increased sufficiently to solve those old-time disservices of impoliteness and delay. How had the extra staff been obtained, did you say? In one direction salaries had been improved because of the breakaway from local government standards and raised to levels similar to those of the teaching profession. This did not touch the counter clerks and unskilled workers. In this direction there was a silent revolution. Strangely enough, whereas in the fifties young people sought jobs with good, that is, convenient-to-them, working hours and amenities such as canteens and music, the ever-increasing difficulties of bus queues, cinema queues, waiting for a hair-do, higher charges at popular holiday periods, had caused a reversion, and enough of these young people saw the hidden assets of a librarian's life to aspire to it. The five-day week became 4½ days; split duties on two days (with travelling allowance for the second time of travel in one day) made all sorts of things so much easier that they could be done comfortably and even in leisure.

Information—and recreational reading—meant increased productivity in all walks of life. Were libraries tied to the dictates of the state? Not really, when people saw and admired the results. Some of the staff were former processors, classifiers, and cataloguers. Through the National Library Centre the majority of books were ordered and received fully prepared for the shelves with the catalogue entries supplied. BNB was there, but not as a substitute for a catalogue. The dictionary catalogue had gone to join the indicator in the library schools' museum of library archives, though it was still used for small collections of books.

What else? We found such details as the Browne system of charging universal in Britain because none of the experiments made by librarians in this country and abroad had produced a better or faster method. With uniform stationery in use and issues sorted by classification and coloured cards, an assistant could work anywhere at a moment's notice. Moreover, the additional counter staff meant that queues were rare.

There was a new zest among librarians themselves. Firstly because

all types of library worker came together for training at one of the country's four library schools. A two-year course gave most of the time to acquiring a knowledge of the media of communication, what they are and how to use them—a modernised bibliography and assistance to readers' course—with English literature modified in the first year to a place alongside the literatures of other special subjects. Cataloguing and classification were mainly historical subjects treated in outline only plus a more detailed working knowledge of the national scheme in use. At the end of the first year, students went out for three months' study tour, at home and abroad, collecting impressions and testing their views. The second year was devoted to specialisation in a subject field of knowledge of interest to the student, plus the newer subjects of public relations, psychology, salesmanship and public speaking. For the minority who decided administration was more interesting than working with books and readers, the second year would be spent on practical problems, case studies, committee meetings and the like, and the newer subjects mentioned above.

Taken all round it sounds as though librarians are having a cushy time . . . on a bed of roses . . . bed . . . sounds . . . eh? oh! There was my electronic tea-maker at work . . . the gurgle of boiling water pouring on to the tea-leaves pulled me out of my nightmare.

As I sipped my Lap Sang Shu I recalled what I could. Impossible? Far-fetched? I didn't see why it need be, and I leaped out of bed eager to do all I could to help industry to realise that the library could help industry to realise new heights of productivity and would in its turn help the library to reali . . . *ad infinitum*.

Berkshire Bookbinding Co., Ltd.

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS

NON - FICTION AND
REFERENCE BINDINGS
ARE OUR SPECIALITY

**27, ELDON TERRACE
READING, BERKS.**

Telephone: Reading 60688.

***"That trustworthy
and well-tried
favourite"***

(meaning **KEESING'S** of course)

writes Mr. Geoffrey Whatmore, Librarian of the Manchester Guardian, in his article on Sources of Contemporary Biography in the Spring 1955 issue of the "Library Review".

CRAMERS for MUSIC

MUSICAL LITERATURE
AND MUSIC BINDING

**139, New Bond Street
London, W.1**

★ Special Music Enquiry Bureau



THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 48. No. 9

SEPTEMBER, 1955

EDITORIAL

TWO SUMMERS AGO we were deploring the lack of light-hearted and frankly humorous articles about librarianship. Two Christmases back they came like a spate of fast bowlers to confound us with their riches. Since that time, to judge by contributions received (though not always published), the opinion has become established that the *Assistant Librarian* is predominantly concerned with such a view of librarianship—light-hearted, whimsical, cynical, even at moments witty; but, heaven forbid, never serious. The view, encouraged no doubt by the tone of some of our official reports, could not be more mistaken. We cling stubbornly to the belief that assistants are willing to take their librarianship seriously, and we emphasise once more our standing invitation to them to discuss matters of moment in this journal. Our correspondence pages have always been healthy, but comment on the opinions of others is not by itself enough. It is necessary sometimes to stick out our own necks, to give others the pleasure of wielding the chopper; some of them may even agree with our views, and say so! We urge all members, therefore, and especially all our recent correspondents, to take the bolder course, and submit an original article for publication. Probably not all of them will be accepted, but that possibility never dismayed anyone who believed that he had something worth-while to say.

NEWS AND NOTES

A.A.L. DANCE.

The Liverpool and District Division is holding a Dance at the Royal Hotel, Southport, on Thursday, 22nd September (during the L.A. Conference Week), 8 p.m. till midnight. Dance tickets may be obtained from the A.A.L. Publications stand at the Conference or on application to the Hon. Secretary. Price 3s. 6d. Refreshments available. Dress optional.

E. K. WILSON,

*Hon. Secretary,
Art Library, William Brown Street,
Liverpool, 3.*

THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION IN LIBRARIANSHIP (London Region) is publishing a series of "Notes for Tutors," based

on discussions recently organised by the Committee. The first three, covering Classification and Cataloguing; Assistance to Readers; Library Organisation and Administration will be available by 1st September, price 1s. 6d. each, from the Hon. Secretary, Mr. J. S. Davey, F.L.A., Central Library, Fore Street, Edmonton, N.9.

LEEDS SCHOOL OF LIBRARIANSHIP OLD STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION We are asked to announce that in spite of difficulties, this association hopes to continue. Its next social function will be the Annual Dinner, to be held in Sheffield on Saturday, 8th October. Interested members should get in touch with the secretary, Miss P. Harding, Sherwood, Carr Road, Sheffield, 6.

TALKING ABOUT READING

ALEXANDER BARON

By A. C. JONES

JUST AS his ex-service heroes, Jack Agass in *Rosie Hogarth* and Mark Strong in *With Hope, Farewell*, find difficulty in settling down in the civilian world in which they reluctantly return, so Alexander Baron has never really found his place in the world of fiction. His first novel, *From the City, From the Plough*, was hailed as the greatest yet written about the late war; his short story, "The Sentry," received a respectful reading on the Third Programme: and yet it is generally agreed that his later work falls far short of his early promise. His six books constitute an excellent laboratory for the student of literature who would consider some of the problems of fiction writing and the qualities which go to make up a good novel.

It is a truism that, in some sense, every novel is autobiographical; a common fallacy that every living incident in a novel must be the recorded experience of the novelist. But it is clear that Baron has kept more closely than most writers to the borderland between fact and fiction, and in this lies the key to his strange inequalities. Successful novels are of two kinds: on the one hand, the novel form is the medium through which the author conveys his view of life (Angus Wilson, *Hemlock and After*); on the other, the novel is just a well-constructed story (most of C. S. Forester, for example). At the highest point (Hardy, Dickens, Dostoevsky), there occurs a fusion of plot and philosophy. The truly great artist in fiction or any other medium must have the ability to enter deeply into his own experiences, and Baron clearly has that ability in relation to his experiences of war.

From the City, From the Plough (1949) is a fine novel because in it he does more than tell a story about one little war; he conveys something of the nature of war and of men at war (as Crane did, and as Conrad conveyed something of the nature of sea and of men at sea). His story, realistically told, is that of a regiment from the tiresome training of 1941, through D-day landings to its eventual annihilation. His powers of invention were scarcely called into question; the plot, its time sequence, its dramatic climaxes, its logical beginning and end, were already there. But Baron's fine writing and deeply felt emotions put flesh on the bare bones.

This first success was followed by *There's no Home* (1950), the story of a battalion in Sicily, not in action this time but at rest, awaiting the invasion of Italy. All the earlier qualities are evident, the record of an atmosphere, the characterisation, knowledge of the soldier mind; but this time the thread of historical action is missing, and the plot which Baron supplies in its place is scarcely adequate for its purpose. The episodic treatment so successful in the novel of action becomes a cause of weakness when the framework is less assured.

The Human Kind was not published until 1953, but in conception and no doubt in much of its actual writing it belongs with these two earlier works. It is a series of unconnected episodes—"short stories" we must call them, though "essays" would be more accurate—of army life during the war: England, Sicily, Normandy. The volume supplements the two full-length novels, explaining some passages, giving alternative versions of others. "The Sentry" is here, and a straightforward account of an incident which became transformed in *There's no Home*; and "Mrs. Grocock's Boy" uses again, as in a kaleidoscope,

some details of the invasion scene in *From the City, From the Plough*. Just as an artist's sketches may be more powerful than his finished work, so it is notable that in these episodes Baron, freed from the necessity of fabrication, achieves the emotional intensity of his first great novel; and if he sometimes verges on the sentimental, we must remember that sentimentality was in the air at the time of which he writes.

In *Rosie Hogarth* (1951) and *With Hope, Farewell* (1952) he turns his attention to the post-war scene. Jack Agass, one of the sergeant types we have already met in action, faces up ineffectually to the problems of peace; so does Mark Strong, notwithstanding the fact that he, for a change, was cast as a fighter pilot. *Rosie Hogarth* is a novelist's novel, in which the strengths and weaknesses already noticed become more clearly apparent. As a social study of life in a particular corner of post-war Islington it rings absolutely true. The characters, though some seem less clearly observed than the ones encountered under fire, are yet for the most part convincing and interesting. (Their hearts of gold would not shame William Saroyan, but Baron shares with Saroyan at his early best the ability to convince us that people really are like this). But a social study of post-war Islington containing some well-drawn characters is not a novel. On one plane or another something must happen to those characters in order to produce a successful novel of either of our two kinds—something at the least plausible, something at the best inevitable; and the framework into which Baron's people are fitted is so artificial as to be quite unconvincing. The solution to the enigma of Rosie Hogarth herself is in fact so heavily stage-managed that it provokes shudders of irritation instead of some sympathy for the right to hold unpopular views, as the author seems to have intended.

With Hope, Farewell (1952) is no more satisfying; it adds little to our convictions about anti-Semitism which is its theme, and the hope of the title is too little and too late to relieve a rather pointless gloom. For once, too, the characterization is uncertain, and in spite of the confidence with which he handles local colour the author is, on this evidence, as much out of touch with London's Jewry as with the "few" of Fighter Command.

Before considering Baron's latest novel it will be interesting to review the pros and cons so far. His greatest novel, *From the City, From the Plough*, is a work of near-fiction only, a pocket history of the invasion of Normandy in which the historian has recorded not only the battles but also the thoughts and emotions of a group of men to whom he has given fictitious names. This is the method of the historical novelist, over whom Baron has the advantage that he has actually met his characters—and his delineation of them is almost always flawless. *The Human Kind* is a work of similar quality, but *There's no Home* belongs to both worlds: the observed incidents are powerfully recorded; the fictitious recitative is seldom very convincing. The two later novels fail because they are in no sense historical narratives, and the author's invention is inadequate to his task. The two greatest qualities apparent in his work so far are his character drawing and his flair for violent crowd scenes—battle in Normandy, bonfire night in Islington, anti-Jewish demonstrations in Dalston.

There was every reason to expect, therefore, that Baron would be attracted sooner or later to the medium of the historical novel, where the narrative thread would be provided on which to display his more certain qualities. He could have chosen no more suitable subject than the conquest of Mexico for his first attempt, and although *The Golden Princess* (1954) must be accounted another failure it is a more glorious

one than those which preceded it, and an interesting one in the development of this very interesting novelist. Baron's Conquistadors have much in common with the regiment in *From the City, From the Plough*. They are drawn as individuals, although one feels that the author is less comfortably inside their minds than in those of his 1944 comrades. Substantially, this is a retelling of the Prescott story—though an impressive record of original research is also appended. There are no more magnificent battle scenes than those here recorded, and Baron succeeds in re-creating them with a warmth and colour which are sometimes absent from Prescott's stately narrative. In particular, his account of the Noche Triste—the Night of Sorrows on which Cortez and his band were first expelled from the city of Mexico—is a supremely effective piece of imaginative writing. The weakness of this novel is its indiscipline. The very wealth of the material, all of it written up in exemplary fashion, gives the same impression as one of Hollywood's more lavish spectacles (and since Hollywood must sooner or later turn to this story, would it be unkind to guess that the possibility was in the author's mind?). Everything is here, from beautiful slave-girls to the destruction of a city, from human sacrifices to pre-fabricated warships. Baron is no Tolstoy, and 395 pages cannot digest a novel on so mighty a theme.

What, then, of the future? Further historical novels are perhaps to be expected; but it would scarcely be surprising if Baron broke quite away from the novel form—biography, for example, would seem to be a field particularly well suited to his talents. At least there is no reason to believe that he is written out. He is having difficulty in finding his place, but a place he surely must find.

“ I WANT TO BE A LIBRARIAN ”

On Saturday, 25th June, there was broadcast in the “ I want to be . . . ” careers series featured on Children's Hour, a half-hour programme on librarianship as a career. This programme was indirectly the result of pressure by the A.A.L. for a broadcast on librarianship as one way of celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of the Association.

The programme was in dramatic (and romanticised) form, and told the story of Waring, a young boy, entering the profession via his local public library, returning from national service and proceeding to library school before obtaining his first professional post in a special (industrial) library. The story was perhaps given some authenticity by recordings made at Chiswick Central Library and the School of Librarianship, North-Western Polytechnic.

The Honorary Secretary would be pleased to hear from any librarian who has received enquiries regarding entering the profession as a direct result of this programme.

E.M.

SPRING GROVE POLYTECHNIC, ISLEWORTH

We are asked to point out that part-time classes in Librarianship are still continuing at the Spring Grove Polytechnic, London Road, Isleworth, and they are unaffected by the transfer elsewhere of the full-time school.

Provision for 1955-6 includes courses for the First Professional, Registration and parts of the Final examinations. Inquiries (HOU 1488) and enrolments are invited after September 12th.

THE SUMMER EXAMINATIONS, 1955

TUTORS' COMMENTS, edited by O. S. TOMLINSON.

Registration Group C—Organisation and Administration.

The team of contributors who have assisted with the answers to this examination is L. L. Arden, D. V. Arnold, W. F. Broome, A. G. S. Enser, D. J. Foskett, R. J. Hoy, F. N. McDonald, E. S. Raven, W. L. Saunders and A. Thompson. The Editor is deeply obliged to them for their unstinted help, readily given, in spite of many other commitments, holidays and the fact that they were required to produce their notes in a very short time.

One of the instructions regularly given to contributors is not to waste space by criticism of the questions or the paper as that is not the purpose of this feature, nor do such notes help students. We will depart from our custom this time to congratulate the examiners of this Group on the very fair and sensible paper presented. We have heard this comment from many quarters. The questions present that nice blend of theory and practice that is the best way of testing the capabilities of potential chief librarians. Other examiners could do well to note. One criticism that has been made is that many of the questions could not be answered fully in half an hour. We think that is not a valid comment and would remind students that the examiners realise the time element presses the candidate and only expect summaries of points to be made in such answers. The well-informed could always write for more than half an hour on anything. Brevity and clarity are as much desirable attributes in librarians as the other qualities we wish to test.

Students will do well to remember once again that each of these answers represents but the views and opinion of a single qualified person, and that other answers may well be equally acceptable to the examiners. Tutors continually emphasise the danger of the stereotyped model-answer that trips off the pen whatever the question.

Considerations of space have caused the omission of an answer to question 9 (a). It was considered that the other part of the question would present a less familiar and equally useful point of view.

Q.1. *Discuss the value of statistics as an aid to library administration.*

It seems necessary first to enumerate the statistics usually collected by librarians. A start can be made by using the headings recommended for an Annual Report (covered by the code-word GIESIR for ease of remembering):—

General statistics (population, staff, rateable value).

Income (Fees, fines, rate).

Expenditure (books, salaries, wages, upkeep, loans).

Stock (additions, withdrawals, replacements).

Issues (by departments, subjects).

Readers (adult, junior, schools, tickets).

To be of value, statistics must be accurately compiled and, when used comparatively, must be based on mutual conditions. Given the two premises above, the value of statistics as an aid to library administration depends on when, why and where they are used.

The librarian can use the statistics of a single subject, statistics of sub-

jects in relationship to each other, or in comparison with similar statistics of other authorities. He will use them in preparing his annual estimate, supplementary estimate, annual report, in support of a special project, to answer questions asked of him by his committee, or governing body, or to answer questionnaires.

Without the aid of statistics the librarian would have no yard-stick to measure increases or decreases; would have no ready means of interpreting the meaning of comparative figures; would have no readily understandable and presentable evidence to support his claims for, or answer to attacks upon, the service; and would be very soon in conflict with other chief officials of his authority, e.g., the treasurer.

Clearly defined statistics, accurately compiled, will always be of value, since such figures are usually the only tangible evidence a librarian can produce, especially in a committee room. But whenever statistics are used comparatively their value may not only be dispelled but harm done to the end in view if care is not taken to ensure that the comparable bases equate each other in every respect.

For example, in a comparison of statistics of issues, library "A" may include reference library issues, block issues to schools, staff issues and so on, whereas library "B" only totals actual book issues over the counter for home-reading. Again, library "A" may allow readers four tickets each and fourteen days reading time for loans, whilst library "B" only allows two tickets per reader and twenty-one days reading time for loans. It is obvious that a comparison of the issue statistics between these two libraries will have little practical value, and indeed, would be misleading unless the differences in compilation were clearly stated.

Provided statistics are kept as enumerated earlier, and not enlarged to cover extraneous detail, thereby wasting time, staff and stationery, the value of statistics as an aid to library administration covers the fields of

book provision, the number and use of staff and the husbandry of the service as a whole.

Q.2. Summarise the arguments for and against the division of library staffs into professional and non-professional groups.

Arguments FOR:—

1. In every type of library there are many duties necessary to the efficient running of the system that do not need the attention of professionally-trained librarians, but are done by them. It is uneconomic and wasteful of manpower to misemploy people in this manner and helps to produce an inefficient service. Some would be better performed by professionally trained clerks, or other personnel.

2. To misemploy professional personnel leads to feelings of frustration amongst them and produces inefficiency caused by this frustration and/or by their inability to carry out professional duties because of routine demands on their time.

3. The present method, common to many libraries, of recruitment of staff with a view to each and every one becoming qualified and a potential chief librarian is unrealistic. It misleads recruits about their possibilities of a career and wastes time and money in training and examinations to no purpose. It would be better to have two streams of recruitment, the non-professional staff much in the present way, the professionals either by more stringent demands of education, interests and character (thus leading to the selection of an "elite corps") or by encouraging professional entry at a later stage, e.g., graduates or library school trained.

4. The reduced need for professionally-intending staff will lead to the production of better recruits. The knowledge that present methods mean a long period of "apprenticeship," in which a lot of time is spent in routine work of little professional value discourages many from taking up librarianship, or, as they find out

the facts later, leads to their early departure. Other professions are much more attractive in that they mostly train professional staff on professional duties.

5. It will be easier to employ part-time and temporary staff for routine duties in those districts where there is a shortage of recruits. This type of person expects to do routine work.

6. In actual practice many libraries do employ their staff in this manner. Some knowingly (particularly special libraries) and many unconsciously, by allocating routine duties to those of their staff who fail to qualify or show interest. It would be more honest in the first place to acknowledge that they will do non-professional duties, and not employ all juniors on such duties irrespective of their career intentions.

7. The employment of two strata will lead to a better realisation amongst employers and public of the nature and value of librarians.

8. The use of non-professionals would not necessarily lead to "dead-end" jobs. They would be paid adequately and there would be opportunity for higher paid supervisory posts: there would also be the normal wastages through marriage, etc.

9. The system works in scores of other jobs:—in industry, banks, hospitals, law, engineering, local government departments, etc. It has also been found to work in many libraries, especially in the U.S.A. To ensure its success carefully planned work schedules must be drawn up and perhaps the whole of our current ideas re-thought, especially in the arrangement of buildings and departments and in the reader service approach. Some semi-professional jobs may have to be outlined but these could usefully be performed by trainees.

Arguments AGAINST :—

1. It is impracticable to separate professional and non-professional duties in many departments (especially small branches).

2. The employment side by side

of two differently recruited, paid and intentioned groups will lead to bad staff relationships and produce administrative headaches.

3. Many seemingly simple routine processes do in fact require a good deal of professional knowledge, training and judgment in their execution. The fact that one must introduce semi-professional grades demonstrates the impossibility of division of duties.

4. The employment of staff on, presumably, lower educational qualifications than now, will lead to a diminution of staff standards all-round and to a general lowering of pay. Unscrupulous employers might use this to dilute the staff and reduce the number of professional posts.

5. Staff employed on non-professional duties will have a "blind-alley" job, with no sense of service, and consequently will give less service.

6. The present method of recruitment produces the best persons, as the examination system effectively weeds out the unsuitable personnel at each level.

7. It is not possible to compare our work with other jobs. We deal with many more of the public than most others. Many libraries say that they have in fact tried so to divide their staffs with unfortunate results.

Q.3. Give some account of the development of subject specialization as a feature of inter-library co-operation in post-war Britain.

Subject specialization is taken to mean the provision in general libraries of special collections of books and other materials. Such special collections have existed for many years, but have hitherto been limited to those subjects considered appropriate to the needs of each community or society served. The sum total of such special collections did not give encyclopædic coverage. In post-war activities in this field the distinguishing feature has been the planned distribution of special collections among co-operating libraries in order to secure fuller aggregate coverage. This has some-

times meant, of course, the acceptance by individual libraries of subjects of no particular local interest.

The most notable scheme is that of the London Metropolitan Boroughs which was begun in 1948. One of its aims is to provide for London a book-service as extensive as that of any large provincial city while retaining local control in each metropolitan borough.

The various subjects represented in Dewey's classification have been divided among the twenty-eight boroughs, not in strict Dewey order but by assembling related topics. Each library is expected to buy a copy of every new book coming within its field and appropriate to the aim mentioned (in practice all books listed in B.N.B. costing more than 12s. 6d.), to acquire by purchase or accept as a gift older material, and to buy and file periodicals dealing with the special subject. Furthermore, specializing libraries undertook to buy any book which had been asked for at another Metropolitan library and which had not up to that time been acquired.

Eventually it is hoped that each library will be able to house its special collection in a separate department. With interavailability of tickets, students and research workers from all parts of London can visit, borrow from, or study in any of the libraries. The value of such a series of special departments in the years to come can easily be visualised.

The cost of the special books, expected to be about £200 per year, is to be regarded as additional to the normal book fund.

Related ideas are the scheme for preserving copies of old fiction (organised on an alphabetical basis) and the provision of foreign fiction (each library collecting a particular language).

The South-Eastern Regional Library Bureau's scheme began in 1950. The number of libraries involved is larger and the area covered more extensive than in London, hence the organization is different. The emphasis is on the lending of books rather than on the provision of facilities for study.

Subjects have been divided among the authorities according to the Dewey classification as used in B.N.B. Some libraries are acquiring older books and American books. Periodicals are not specifically included. Certain classes of books, outside the scope of S.E.R.L.B., have been excluded. There are also upper and lower price limitations.

Similar schemes have been started in Wales and in the North-Western Region. Some schemes include arrangements for co-operative book-purchase, as in N.E. England. These are not always on the subject basis, and may be limited to books costing more than a given figure. Many neighbouring libraries operate local arrangements of this kind, e.g., agreement to buy particular reference books or technical works. Other schemes are those designed to provide a co-operative reference and information service to industry as CICRIS (which is dealt with in more detail in Question 13), or the Sheffield Scheme, and those schemes of further specialisation amongst libraries already specialised. Examples of these are the Standing Conference of Theological and Philosophical Libraries in London (SCOTAPLL); the Medical Libraries of London Scheme of Co-operation, in which, for example, the Royal College of Physicians specialises on medical books published before 1850; co-operation between the University and Law Libraries in London, whereby, for example, University College Library concentrates on Roman Law: the ASLIB subject group, e.g., the Aeronautical Group including the Royal Aircraft Establishment College of Aeronautics, Ministry of Supply Royal Aeronautical Society, A. V. Roe and Co., Ltd., and others.

Finally, one must note the reports of the Working Party on Co-operative provision of books, periodicals and related materials in libraries set up by the Library Association which have outlined a material scheme of libraries graded A, B or C, according to holdings, the books themselves being categorized into either reference or loan copies.

Q.4. *'You are required to review the procedure followed in your library for the recovery of overdue books, to report on defects, and suggest any necessary improvements. Outline the programme of your investigation.'*

REVIEW.

The library under review issues about 2,000,000 books per annum. Over 75,000 overdue-notices are despatched annually for books not returned when due. Three overdue notices are sent at intervals of one week, each indicating the details of the book(s) overdue and announcing the amount of fine due. If the third formal notice fails to produce a result a personal letter is sent. If this fails also, details are passed to the Treasurer. The first notice is sent when the book is two weeks overdue and has been on loan for four weeks. Notices are prepared and despatched daily as necessary. The approximate cost of this procedure in postages alone amounts to over £475 per annum.

REPORT.

Consideration was given to discovering :—

(a) *What effect each notice had on hastening the return of a book.* To do this a daily record was kept of the number of notices prepared and sent. The differences between the weekly figures indicated the number of books returned in relation to the relevant notices.

(b) *Whether there was a natural rhythm in the return of books of which advantage might be taken.* To this end a daily record was maintained of the number of books returned from given "issues" for which no overdue notices were sent.

(c) *What effect the personal letter had on hastening the return of books.* Similar records were kept.

(d) *Whether better results could be obtained for about the same expenditure.*

These investigations revealed the following defects:—

(a) The overdue notices had little or no effect until after six weeks, i.e.,

until the third overdue-notice was sent.

(b) There appeared to be a natural rhythm in the return of books which began to accelerate after three weeks, so that by the end of eight weeks very nearly all books on loan were returned without the sending of overdue-notices. This rhythm was not being advantageously applied to save labour.

(c) The sending of "personal letters" resulted in barely half of the recipients returning the books outstanding, so that many books had to be written off annually.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. Reduce formal notices to 2 only:

(a) a printed postcard with a formal legend with no reference to details of books overdue;

(b) a printed folder with a formal legend with details of books overdue.

2. Send first overdue-notice after six weeks; the second after eight weeks, in batches on 1st and 15th of the month respectively. After 10 weeks record details of outstanding books by readers' names.

3. Increase the amount of the rate. Charge half rate in Junior Library.

4. Appoint a man to collect books not returned after 10 weeks.

5. Upon failure of the Collector to obtain the return of books after two weeks request return within five days by Registered Letter. If neither books nor Registered Letter are returned make application through the Legal Department to the Court to issue Summons.

6. Anticipated result—recovery of books to such an extent as amply to justify expenses involved.

Q.5. *It is sometimes argued that centralized library administration leads to under-use of the capabilities of branch librarians and their senior staff. By what means may this tendency be counteracted in a system of municipal or county branches?*

Since the "or" between municipal

and county branches in this question is not italicized, it must be the intention of the examiners that whatever means are suggested must be applicable to both municipal and county systems having branch libraries. This interpretation, rightly or wrongly, makes answering the question more difficult through the peculiarities encountered by county branch library administration caused by geographical distances separating the staffs.

However, the means that follow are capable of application to municipal or county branch systems.

The more general means of counteracting the under-use of the capabilities of branch librarians and their senior staff in centralized library administration are as follows:—

(a) The appointment of a Branch Supervisor whose duties are to act as the link between the branch staffs and the Chief and the Deputy Chief Librarian; to ensure conformity of practice and procedure throughout the system; to inculcate and foster a team spirit among the branch staff; and to prevent any feelings of isolationism breeding and spreading in the branch system. Since the Branch Supervisor would have more intimate knowledge of the branch staff, it would be his responsibility to bring to the notice of the Chief Librarian the under-use of the capabilities of branch librarians and their senior staff.

(b) A scheme of regular meetings of branch librarians to discuss problems, and to be informed of policy decisions.

(c) The formation of Staff Guilds with the active support of the Chief Librarian, and the publishing of a live staff magazine.

(d) Schemes of regionalization where thought necessary.

(e) Adequate lines of communication between the branches and headquarters, e.g., telephone and daily delivery services.

(f) A planned programme of work, e.g., stock editing, to be carried out at branch level, and in which the qualifications of senior staff can be

fully used.

A more recent development in this field of library administration and one which is, by proof of practical results, relevant as an answer to the question concerns the use of professional staff in subject specialization. This scheme has been applied at Tottenham and involves firstly, the division of the staff into professional and non-professional groups. Secondly, all administrative detail is done throughout the system by the non-professional staff. And thirdly, the professional staff are concerned primarily with subject specialization throughout the system. So far as the professional staff are concerned, the whole of knowledge is divided into broad subject groups. Each of these subject groups is placed under the charge of a senior librarian who is responsible for the provision, revision and withdrawal of stock within his particular subject field and dealing with enquiries in that subject too, throughout the system. To assist him, other professional staff, including branch librarians, are allocated to his group. This gives a branch librarian dual interests, oversight of the daily administrative work at his branch library under the general responsibility of the Head of Administration, and participation in a subject field of book provision and enquiry work. In the case of large counties, this scheme can be applied on an area basis with regional headquarters. It should be noted that this scheme involves branch librarians spending some of their duty-time at headquarters, but in their absence from their particular branch libraries, their senior staff are afforded an opportunity to exercise limited control.

Such a scheme as this is a possible answer to the under-use of the capabilities of branch librarians and their senior staff in centralized library administration.

Q.6. *"Whether libraries should engage in lecture work has often been debated; to-day, however, it would seem that 'the ayes have it'." The quotation is from the 1927 edition of L. R. McColvin's Library extension*

work and publicity.

Discuss the validity of McCoolvin's conclusion for the librarians of 1955.

The attitude of librarians to lecture work has always been capable of division into four groups: (a) those who regard it as an unproductive, time-consuming activity which adds nothing of value to the library service and is not "librarianship"; (b) those who agree with the first group but tolerate the work as, at best, good publicity for the service (and the librarian!) or, at worst, a sop to the committee (who tend to set store by such things); (c) those who believe that it has a place in library extension activity so long as the lectures are somehow related to the use of books or the library; (d) those who believe that the library should be the cultural centre of the community, that the Council has a duty to those who like lectures and if the librarian doesn't organise them, who will?, etc. The librarians have usually a keen personal interest in the arts and the lecture tends to be but one of a number of cultural activities run "by the Library Committee."

In 1927 the majority of the "Ayes" organised lectures to stimulate interest in books and the library, there being little money to indulge in other forms of publicity—or to buy books!

Since 1927, various factors have arisen:—

1. The growth of the cinema, radio and television as purveyors of culture of varying kinds.
2. A tremendous increase in the amount of individual leisure.
3. Growth of education, both "formal" and "further".
4. Great increase in library budgets, leading to improved and more attractive book stocks, more and better qualified staff, and more inviting library buildings.
5. Inauguration of many new and highly successful library systems, particularly in suburban areas, and reorganisation of older ones.
6. Decline of interest in the study

group and the "educational" lecture.

7. The activities of the Arts Council and similar bodies.

8. The provision of the Local Government Act, 1948, with its approval of the expenditure of public monies on cultural activities.

It is difficult to generalise without supporting statistics and examples, but the conclusion of 1927 would seem to be almost invalid in 1955. Librarians who organise lecture programmes have found that they make not one jot of effect on the use of the library. The most popular lecturers are those "big names" who have achieved publicity in other fields, and the persons who attend are usually those who know and use the library anyway. It is now legally possible to spend money on library lectures if desired (though not by virtue of the Public Library Acts) but most librarians to-day would rather use money voted for lectures in other ways, for they realize that the increased use of libraries is far more likely from better, cleaner, more comprehensive book stocks, more attractive buildings, and by employing a staff trained and capable of giving service. They also feel that there are now many other bodies able to organise cultural activities and the responsibilities of Further Education Authorities should not be thrust upon librarians, with neither the time nor the staff nor the money to carry them out.

This would seem to indicate that the "Noes have it," in 1955, but there are still some who believe (a) that lectures provide good "publicity" and can be tolerated with the minimum of expense and effort, e.g., by handing the arrangements over to a lecture agency; (b) that the library should organise all cultural activities in the district. For these latter it is usually a wild personal enthusiasm which they would indulge somehow, even if they were not librarians.

One should remember, however, that it might have been better to query the validity of the statement for the *Library Committee* of 1955, for they,

after all, decide policy and they often get sentimental about lectures, and decree a policy that must be carried out even if the librarian does not personally say "Aye."

Q.7. Outline the service which you think should be given by a library authority to the following special groups:—

- (a) *Short term patients in a general hospital;*
- (b) *residents in hostels for the aged;*
- (c) *inmates and staff of prisons;*
- (d) *bed-ridden invalids living at home.*

(a) Where a service is already being given by a voluntary organisation a library authority need only to offer to lend special books on request. If the Library Authority provides a service, the Library Association suggests a charge of 10s. 6d. per bed per annum be made. If possible, a library room should be provided in which walking patients can browse. Patients confined to bed should be visited once a week and a book trolley used for displaying books. In the case of short-term patients there is no need for a frequent change of stock. The hospital librarian should be able to call upon the assistance of professionally qualified librarians. Most people in hospital like light reading, but the full range of the library's resources should be offered to those with more developed taste. Speed in obtaining such books is essential for short-term patients. The Medical Officer of Health should be consulted on the medical aspect of circulating books in hospitals.

(b) If the authority possesses a travelling library a periodical visit would be sufficient. Alternatively, the deposit of a collection of books to be exchanged at intervals would be appropriate. The full resources of the library should be mobilised in meeting special requests. No charge should be made for this service.

(c) The Prison Commissioners pay a grant of 6s. per head of the average prison population. This is barely sufficient to cover the cost of books and

does not allow for the appointment of a professional librarian. The organisation of the library in the prison is usually in the hands of an officer-librarian. Members of the public library staff should be in attendance when the prison library is open, usually lunch times, to act as readers' advisers, for many of the inmates do not normally read books outside. Subject to the need for censorship, which has special rules in prisons, resources of the library should be made available. The stock of books, if too small to provide a good choice, should be exchanged periodically. Prisoners sometimes read as many as eight books a week. If prison routine permits, a special library in which prisoners may browse should be provided, but in any case a weekly exchange of books should be permitted.

If the prison staff are too far from the public library for normal use, a small deposit of books could be made for them, or alternatively they could use the prisoners' library.

(d) In the case of old people and invalids living at home, if they have no messenger to borrow books for them, it is reasonable for the library authority to provide a door-to-door service. Such a service is expensive to operate, particularly if the library has no transport of its own. Some authorities have been able to enlist the aid of voluntary organisations who provide a vehicle and personnel, the only cost to the library service being for petrol. Visits to invalids are made weekly or fortnightly and every effort is made to meet special requests. Some libraries have schemes whereby messengers are organised who undertake to exchange books at the library for house-bound readers. The W.V.S., Toc H, Scouts, Guides and similar organisations have been enlisted. All that the library need do then is to assist the messenger in the choice of books where necessary. Some method of indicating such loans on the charges is needed, to avoid fines and to catch up on breakdowns in the messenger system.

Q.8. Outline the function and status of a local library committee in county library practice.

There have been local library committees in some urban areas of county libraries since the early 1920's, where the practice of levying a special rate in addition to the county library rate was adopted. Differential rating with the county providing books and the local authority buildings and staff has now almost completely disappeared, but present-day practice in setting up local committees is seen in a clearer light by harking back to the early days.

There was a clear need for a local committee in a differentially rated area; its function was to decide how much money to raise and how to spend it. Now that flat rating over the whole area is the rule the role of a local committee is perhaps not quite so evident. Indeed, not all counties have local committees feeling that the county library committee is adequate, and that local interests are at least partially represented on it.

However, in most counties, it is found preferable to delegate the local administration of branch libraries (full-time services in an equipped building with a trained staff) to local committees.

The status of these committees is quite clear. They are advisory sub-committees of the county library committee which is itself a sub-committee of the county education committee, or in a few cases, of the county further education sub-committee. Local committees are made up of representatives of the county library committee, the local authority, sometimes any neighbouring authorities, e.g., a rural district, and may co-opt if desired. There should be a formal constitution for the committee so that the extent of its duties is clear. In one or two counties local committees have more autonomy that is generally the case.

The functions of a local committee are advisory and recommending. The committee has only minor executive powers, but even so it can play a valuable part in the development of

the local library service. It is only in cases where what the local committee wants to do is inconsistent with general policy that the county committee will apply the brake. Most county libraries serve large areas—a branch library may be up to 70 or so miles from headquarters—so that a local committee to some extent offsets the dangers of remote control in allowing people to feel that they have some say in the management of their own library. Local knowledge is of great value in matters such as hours of opening and the part the library plays in local community life. Junior staff, and in some counties senior staff too, are interviewed by the local committee, and appointments recommended to the county library committee. Again, a local committee can stimulate the county committee into action by putting the case for a particular local need.

At one time local committees in villages were quite common, but very few of them are still in being nowadays.

Q.9. Summarize the statement of requirements it would be necessary for the librarian to supply to the architect of either (a) the central library of a town of 100,000 inhabitants or (b) a county library headquarters building.

(b) This part of the question is worded generally, so it is advisable to choose a specific figure for population served—200,000 say as an approximate average—and deal with that. It is assumed that the site has been chosen and is in the county town where there is an independent municipal library.

The headquarters library is primarily for administration and the distribution of books, but a small lending library is provided for county residents able to visit it and members of the public will also use the music and drama libraries.

Summary of requirements.

Overall space required - 8,000 sq. ft.

Stack room to hold

50,000 volumes with

provision for extension 2,000 sq. ft.

Circulation department to shelve 5,000 volumes as distribution pool for branches, centres and schools -	1,200 sq. ft.
Cataloguing Department	600 sq. ft.
Lending and Reference Library (shelving for 4,000 volumes) -	1,000 sq. ft.
Music and Drama Library (shelving for 3,000 volumes) -	750 sq. ft.
Students' section (request service) -	400 sq. ft.
Administrative offices—	
County Librarian -	300 sq. ft.
Deputy Librarian -	200 sq. ft.
Clerks and Typists -	300 sq. ft.
Staff retiring room -	300 sq. ft.
Cloakroom accommodation, passages, etc. -	500 sq. ft.
Stores for stationery, cleaners, etc. -	400 sq. ft.

Q.10. *Describe the Westminster system of "token" charging, and estimate the likely advantages and disadvantages of this method.*

The Westminster token charging system has done away with the Brown(e) pocket-ticket and substituted for it a blue plastic token impressed with the City arms. Each reader is given three tokens and a dated Reader's Card which must be returned after twelve months. To operate the system a reader hands to the Assistant Librarian on duty a token for each book he wishes to borrow up to three, at the same time showing his Reader's Card to indicate that his membership of the library is still current. The books are date-stamped with the date due for return. When the reader returns the books he is given tokens in exchange—one for each book returned. A glance at the date label reveals whether the Assistant Librarian on duty has to charge a fine or not.

Should a reader lose a token he is charged 10s. for a replacement. Not more than three new tokens are issued

to any one person in any year.

Advantages. The system ensures (i) considerable saving of time and labour;

(ii) increased lending (turnover) capacity over short rush periods;

(iii) possible saving of money on staff, stationery and postage—no overdue notices are sent to readers;

(iv) no waiting, no queues at the counter—or if a queue, a fast-moving one

(v) staff is released to assist readers when there is the greatest number in need of assistance.

Disadvantages. As a consequence of the introduction of this system—

(i) the staff can have no means of knowing what books are on loan to whom;

(ii) the staff must "sieve" all books returned by readers by checking them against a visible index to discover those required to be reserved. (Westminster does not reserve fiction). That is, automatic declaration of a reserved book is lacking to a great extent. The exceptions are only such books as are very popular and for which many requests have been received. In these cases the book itself carries an indication of reservation;

(iii) more frequent stocktaking must be undertaken either as a set task or by purchase of further copies of books to make up for deficiencies as they become obvious;

(iv) the inter-availability of tickets is affected—(a) in that readers from other Library Authorities must receive special treatment out of the normal course, which involves more labour than a Brown(e) charge would in similar circumstances; (b) Westminster City Library members using the Libraries of other Authorities may be disappointed or inconvenienced if they have not obtained suitable Brown(e) tickets for use in those libraries;

(v) it is not possible to hasten the return of a book on loan and overdue;

(vi) once a book has passed out of

the Accessions Department it may not be possible to prove to the satisfaction of an auditor that it has been put into circulation;

(vii) there is always a growing disparity between the true stock and the catalogued stock which would probably invalidate the system as a useful procedure in a library not having the problems of Westminster City for which it was specifically designed.

Q.11. To what extent should a university library be expected to provide for undergraduate readers? Describe any method of library provision for undergraduates which you would advocate as an alternative to the university library.

There are two especially important words in this question—"university" and "provide". It would be necessary to indicate that the answer might vary according to whether the institution were a "single-body" university with no separate colleges, or one with a central university library as well as separate ones in the various colleges. In the latter case it would be possible to make no provision for undergraduates in the central library, leaving it to the colleges to look after them. A different set of problems would be posed according to whether the university were a residential or a non-residential one.

So far as "provide" is concerned, no doubt it refers primarily to books, but it could include such things as separate reading rooms. In the matter of books, should the library aim to supply only books for study, or for recreational reading as well? (Hence one of the differences between residential and non-residential universities). It is increasingly true that in the matter of formal study an undergraduate's time is taken up with the reading of prescribed texts, and in this respect, at least, access to the shelves may not be necessary.

Should the library reckon to supply as many copies of prescribed texts as there are students? What would the effect of such a policy be on the book funds?

For background academic studies the library's normal acquisition policy should be adequate, since the books in question will be used by others as well as undergraduates.

Answers will be very much a matter of opinion, and candidates should express their own opinions without fear or favour provided that they offer adequate reasons. It might be argued that undergraduates should be treated as ordinary members of the library and that provision should be made for them as for other readers, in which case no alternative plan is necessary.

Alternatives to which reference might be made are (a) a special undergraduate library run by the Student Union; or (ii) a subscription library run by the undergraduates themselves; (iii) schemes for hiring out supplies of set books to borrowers. Since this problem has not been finally and satisfactorily settled anywhere, there is plenty of scope for the exercise of imagination.

Reference should be made to the development of "browsing rooms" in the U.S.A. (the stock being selected by the teaching staff, but the students having free access to that stock). Reference should be made also to libraries in halls of residence.

Q.12. A technical college for 9,000 students is at present being built in a town of 250,000 population. The college is to have a library which will be almost next door to the reference department of the central public library. Outline the possibilities of co-operation and collaboration between the technical college library and the municipal reference library.

Information on libraries in technical colleges is not plentiful and the student who was familiar with the 1938 A.T.L., A.P.T.L., A.T.T.L. joint report, "Libraries in technical institutions," would be off to a good start. Section 9 of the 1954 "Libraries in colleges of further education", by the London Regional Advisory Council for Higher Technological Education also very briefly mentions co-operation.

A college of the size indicated in

such a town should be a considerable asset in the scientific and technical information provision of the area. Readers come first. Students would naturally be able to use the municipal reference library and public library readers should have access to the college library. (More and more colleges are allowing reference facilities to the public and are thereby enabled to take advantage of the net book agreement). The Principal of the college and the municipal librarian should be well-acquainted and should encourage their librarians to collaborate to the full. No elaborate machinery is needed to do this. Of necessity there will be quite an amount of duplication, but consultation should take place whenever the purchase of expensive works is being considered. It would be foolish, for instance, for both libraries to purchase the newly-announced 55 volume, £400 "Handbook of physics." Collaboration can be particularly fruitful in subjects which are not represented in college departments and are not local industries.

In the periodical field co-ordination of holdings and consultation before the addition of new titles should be normal practice. In the last 2 years, for example, at least six new titles have appeared dealing with control engineering or servomechanisms. This is an increasingly important subject and it might be that the two librarians would recommend sharing the titles between them.

A union list, giving holdings, of the periodicals taken by the two libraries, would be a useful project and the two librarians could take the lead in bringing in the industrial libraries in the area to build up, at least, a card union list to be held at the municipal library. Periodicals which are important enough to be held by both libraries would not be sent for binding at the same time.

Photocopying equipment would be needed in both libraries, but it would be useful if the two types of microfilm reader were provided (one in each library)—the normal ground

glass screen one, and the projection type, so that enlargements could be made. For some years to come one micro-opaque reader should be adequate for both libraries. As the two committees concerned belong to one authority, it should not be impossible to arrange for a sharing of cost in such cases.

Catalogues, lists of addition and other similar matter should be exchanged and the students, in particular, should be encouraged by the college librarian and teaching staff to make full use of the wider range of subjects held by the municipal library.

Q.13. Outline the service offered by CICRIS (Co-operative Industrial and Commercial Reference and Information Services) and assess the value of such a service to the special libraries within the area covered by it.

CICRIS is the name of the co-operative information and reference service given by the ten public libraries in the West London Area of the S.E. Regional Board for Industry, supplemented by the resources of the libraries of several industrial concerns and technical colleges in the area and with the support of a number of national organisations such as the British Productivity Council, Government Departmental Libraries, the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Councils, the U.S. Information Service and the Swiss National Bank. The scheme has its headquarters at the Acton Central Library and is managed by a small committee representing both libraries and industry.

The object of the scheme is to provide a convenient source of information for every firm that needs it. The public libraries, in addition to providing general technical works, have each agreed to build up a stock of books and periodicals related to one or more industries, based, where possible, on local interest. Thus first-class subject libraries are being formed and each library has agreed to make its stock available to the others.

The services offered include access

to the stocks of all the co-operating libraries and the supply of information from them: a union list of technical periodicals available in West London: a union list of the specialised reference books in the libraries; and a union list of foreign language and technical dictionaries stocked. Three other projects being undertaken are the compilation of a list of commercial newspapers, one of specialised trade directories and a list of indexes and abstracts available in the region.

The value of the scheme lies chiefly in the following: access by co-operating members to all the above facilities, thus supplementing their own library facilities, or, in the case of industrial concerns without libraries, giving them the assurance that any information they may want will be available in the region: speed in obtaining information, e.g., periodical loans are literally obtained in an hour: providing a clearing house which will deal with an enquiry and see that it is forwarded to someone with a reasonable knowledge of the subject or at least its bibliography: it enables the special libraries to concentrate their resources on matters of vital interest to themselves and not have to expend their resources on little-used material: it enables small firms to keep abreast of the enormous output of research reported in innumerable publications and so increase their efficiency and productivity. The value of the scheme to the nation is recognised by the generous and enthusiastic support it has received from the British Productivity Council. A less tangible, but nonetheless real, value of the scheme is the fostering of close co-operation between the participating libraries, colleges and industry leading to a better understanding of each others' point of view and how each can best assist the other for the good of industry and commerce as a whole.

A similar scheme was projected in North London, based on Tottenham, but this is less well developed. It is not in any way integrated with CICRIS, nor known by that name.

Q.14. To what extent is it desirable and practicable for the library of an industrial concern to extend the firm's library service to its skilled artisans as distinct from its management, technical and research staff?

In general, the desirability is not to be denied since some particular library service is bound to benefit the artisans in the long run, and lead to greater and more efficient productivity.

The services provided should be addressed to bringing about:—

(a) Increased skill in the workers' own art. The day is passing, or has passed, when the trained artisan considers that he has either learned all that is to be known or that he can pick up further skill only from his own experience. He knows the recorded experience of others may be useful to him.

(b) Greater background knowledge of the main processes in which he himself is playing a possibly small but important part, i.e., to help him "to see the wood."

(c) A knowledge of the elementary principles of management with a view to promotion to a supervisory post, e.g., foreman.

(d) Greater general knowledge, with encouragement to use local public library services for the more serious types of recreational and cultural reading.

(e) Knowledge of a higher grade, possibly technological rather than merely technical, leading to further qualifications to a better post.

The practicability is dependent upon how far such services can be provided without interfering with the services of what may be essentially a research library, where a number of the staff may be engaged on scientific intelligence work as part of a research programme. It must be remembered in this connection that information services are an *essential* tool of research in a way that they are unlikely ever to be when it comes to the work of skilled artisans.

The scheme will depend upon excellent co-operation from plant and shop management, and the idea *must* be sold to them if any success is to be obtained.

A practical difficulty is the one that artisans will have in finding the time to come to a library, particularly if they are engaged on work paid in some way on piece rates. It might be necessary to provide mobile services on the shop floor so that least disturbance will be caused. A way might be found to set up a separate shop or plant sub-library from which mobile services could be operated, and that would have to be right in the works and staffed by people who would understand the skilled artisan's point of view. One of the chief problems to be overcome is the antipathy of many artisans to anything that savours too much of the academic, such as a research library. This works' sub-library should be of a much more approachable type, and could possibly have a very close connection with local library services.

A minor point affecting the practicability would be the general policy affecting movement from skilled artisan group to staff positions.

Q.15. *Discuss the relative value of academic and professional qualifications to librarians working in either university or special libraries.*

The word "discuss" opens the door wide to a consideration not merely of current opinions about relative values, but also of the history of the whole problem.

The question is still essentially one of opinion, and candidates should have expressed their own views, provided that they offered adequate reasons for them.

University Libraries.

The advantages of academic qualifications are said to be: (i) familiarity with readers' problems and needs; (ii) ability of graduates to deal with teaching staffs on a footing of equality; (iii) possession of specialised knowledge which makes the graduate better

able to help readers. (*See: Woledge and Page* pp. 82-3). In fact, all three are capable of serious challenge by anyone who gives the matter sufficient thought. The most recent statement of the purely academic point of view is contained in an article by J. H. P. Pafford in the *Stechert-Hafner Book News*, 9, 1954-5, pp. 2-3.

Professional qualifications alone may be said to be more suitable for jobs which can be systematised and have rules drawn up for them. But such qualifications can do much to make the academically-qualified into better librarians by making them aware of the number of solutions, or attempts at solution, of various library problems. Academic librarians tend to stay in the same libraries so long that they may never learn how the rest of the profession works.

It is evident that things are moving in the direction of requiring at least the occupants of the senior posts to have both academic and professional qualifications. One recent advertisement offered two scales of salary—one for applicants with only academic qualifications, and a higher one for those with professional qualifications as well. Another recent advertisement required both types of qualification.

Candidates may have found it necessary to define the limits within which they proposed to answer the question, for a comprehensive answer would have used up far more than the time available.

Special Libraries.

Special libraries may be established by many different types of organisation—governments, professional bodies, societies, private firms—but they all have one common feature: they exist to serve the members' special interests and purposes, which are usually concerned with research and the discovery of new knowledge. The job of the special librarian, therefore, is to ensure the greatest possible use of newly-published work in such fields of special interest, saving the time of the research worker, and also to "protect" him from the vast flood of new publi-

cations; these tasks require a sound knowledge of efficient techniques.

Thus it can be seen that both academic and professional qualifications would be useful to the special librarian. The value of academic qualifications lies in the acquisition of subject knowledge, familiarity with and practice in the methods of research, and a sympathetic understanding of the outlook of the research worker. Professional qualifications, on the other hand, testify to something different; the successful completion of a course of study of library techniques and the materials to which those techniques are applied. The examinations on the "Literature of special subjects" make provision for a measure of expert knowledge of both a subject and its bibliography. Librarianship consists of more than merely techniques, but these are its basis, and the examination syllabus is constantly revised to keep up with technical progress.

Thus it is difficult to draw a comparison between academic and professional qualifications; both are desirable but emphasis on one or the other may predominate in a particular library. Since it is easier to obtain the professional qualification while working, it would seem better to begin professional life having a degree already. But for special librarians who have not been to a University, it would be preferable to become professionally qualified first. Few degrees fit one precisely for a particular job, but one must know its techniques, for without them the work could not be done efficiently. Nevertheless, the value of academic qualifications cannot be denied, and, even when a special librarian has not had the advantage of a University education, he is bound to take steps to acquire at least some of the attainments of such an education.

16. *List, as for the guidance of an architect, the features of planning and design which as librarian you would wish to see incorporated in the library of an institute of education. Add to your list brief explanatory notes where*

these might help the architect.

General. The library will occupy a wing of the Institute Building. Needs own separate entrance. Must be easily shut off from rest of building, particularly from parts in use by children.

Users. (A) Local, i.e. members who visit and work in library; (B) Postal borrowers in outlying districts who will seldom visit the library. Both classes include teachers and Training College lecturers, but (A) also includes University staff and approximately 80 teachers-in-training from the University Department of Education who, though using the university library for background books, will need from the Institute library books on technical aspects of education.

The library is new but expanding rapidly. Present stock of 15,000 may well be 100,000 in 50 years. Interior flexibility more than usually important; modular construction desirable. Should be possible to add to present wing of three storeys and basement, if required.

Though floor space must be usable interchangeably as stack, reading room and administrative accommodation, there will be no stack until stock reaches 25—30,000 volumes.

Broad schedule of present requirements as follows:—

1. Entrance hall with counter, leading into :
2. A room with catalogues, general reference books, bibliographies and display cases for exhibitions.
3. Cataloguers' room adjacent to above, accessible from basement, with book lift to all floors. To accommodate three cataloguing and acquisitions staff but to allow for a future increase in this number.
4. Librarian's office with private entrance, and general entrance through librarian's secretary's office. Latter to accommodate a second typist.
5. Despatch room for postal loans and incoming parcels. To accommodate one porter and junior and to be near "back" or "goods" entrance. Present number of 40—50 postal loans

daily may increase, greatly.

6. Main reading room to seat 40 and to shelve 25,000 books.

7. Four large, sound-proof carrels in which research staff may work and use calculating machines and typewriters.

8. Periodicals room to accommodate current display rack, 150 bound sets (latter will increase) and 15—20 readers. Mainly for use by advanced students; will include microfilm reader and card index to periodical literature.

9. Special collections rooms for—

(a) c.3,000 school text books.

(b) Old children's books. Now c.700 but could grow to several thousand.

10. Staff will use main Institute staff rooms, and the nearby University Library's photo-copying facilities will be used.

11. Personnel lift and staircase position will be largely determined by above-mentioned considerations.

12. There are no problems of air-conditioning or lighting which are peculiar to this particular library. Normal university library considerations will apply here.

A.A.L. CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

Students are reminded that completed application forms, together with the appropriate fees, for the courses beginning in October and November, must reach Mr. J. S. Davey, F.L.A., 49, Halstead Gardens, London, N.21, on or before 30th September, 1955, after which date no application will be considered. Earlier receipt is advis-

able and would be greatly appreciated.

Full particulars of the courses offered are given in the current *Students' Handbook*.

Fees. The fee per course is £2 7s. 6d., plus 10s. extra to students in Africa, America, Asia and Australasia.

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR BINDING

FICTION

In Full Rexine with new reinforced unsewn binding our "Standard Fiction Binding" is the most economic in the country.

JUVENILE "FLATS"

We can solve the problems of this class of work with an almost unbreakable binding that has been proved in Libraries, and that we have evolved for all flat ephemeral work at a reasonable price.

NON FICTION AND MUSIC

A rexine spine with waterproof cloth plus a new and greatly improved joint will give hard and long wear to all volumes at a very moderate range of prices.

We will be very happy to rebind any volumes published in any unsewn binding other than spiral bindings.

We must emphasise that we guarantee all work undertaken by us in any process against fair wear and tear and Library usage

ALL ENQUIRIES WELCOME AT
BENLOCK LIMITED

SOUTH BANK · MIDDLESBROUGH · YORKS.

EXAMINATIONS DON'T MATTER ? or NO UNQUALIFIED PERSONS NEED APPLY

..... with apologies to Ogden Nash.

A point to interest a budding bibliothecal Joad
Was the "publication of the preliminary edition of the American revision
of the Anglo-American Code",
While a matter of lighter import than his bread, or even his butter
Is the Expansive Classification of Charles Ammi Cutter—
A scheme the value of which to him is lesser
Than the development of inter-planetary travel to his predecessor ;
And while ignoring that erudite manual of James Duff Brown,
On the Report on library co-operation in Great Britain and the Report of the
Advisory Council on Education in Scotland and the reports of McColvin
and Tighe, the L.A. examiners go to town.
Though his fore-runners found concentration on Janzoon Coster and the
travels of paper through Asia and the history of the British Museum very
hard
To-day the embryo librarian has quite enough to do with the development of
photographic processes such as diazo and auto-positive paper and the
potentialities of microcard.
When his forebears studied co-operation it meant inter-availability of tickets
and the use of the telephone.
But now it signifies international subject coverage schemes like the Farmington
Plan and such minor arrangements as the M.J.F.R., S.C.O.T.A.P.L.L., and
schemes for Regional Interloan.
A Struggling Bibliophile finds it most reprehensible that to-day
He learns twice as much as his elders did, and still ends up an A.L.A.

SHEILA N. WHITE,

Assistant, Crosby P.L.

BOOKS FOR STUDENTS

HUNT, K. G. *Subject specialisation and co-operative book purchase in the libraries of Great Britain.* Pamphlet series No. 12, 1955. (The Library Association, 3s. (2s. to members)).

The idea of organised purchase and storage of books must be almost as old as the public library movement, but the practical application of this idea has almost all taken place in the post-war years. It is inevitable, therefore, that the Library Association's Pamphlet No. 12 is somewhat dated, even on publication day. It is obviously an "interim report," recording as faithfully as possible a large number of facts which, in the absence of any substantial previous literature, have had to be compiled at first hand from the records of the organisers of the schemes. The author has gone to great trouble to assemble the mass of relevant original material and reduce it to a compact, comprehensible form.

After a brief introduction the first large section deals with Universities and Special Libraries, some of whose schemes date back to pre-war years. The bulk of the remainder of the pamphlet deals with the Metropolitan Boroughs' scheme and that of the South-Eastern Region, whilst the other regions, the Northern, North-Western, East Midland, Welsh

and Scottish share the last few pages with a brief summary of the early work of the Library Association's Working Party. This emphasis on the two earlier schemes is unavoidable because they had been in operation for some time and possessed substantial written material. It is, however, hardly fair to some of the later schemes which, in conception and coverage, are in many respects equal to, and in some respects better than, either the Metropolitan or South-Eastern Schemes.

After a close study of the pamphlet, coupled with two years' experience of the organisation and running of a Subject Specialisation Scheme, one must agree with Mr. Hunt in his tacit approval of the schemes which the pamphlet reviews. It is obvious, however, that the national organisations must assist in further co-operation between the Regions, the Universities and the Special Libraries if we are to provide anything like complete specialisation in subject literature.

Subject Specialisation will, in time, become as much a part of our public library system as our present Regional and National Inter-lending. As Mr. Hunt implies, the infant schemes require care and guidance rather than chastisement and criticism, and in his survey he has been factual and encouraging rather than critical.

A. LONGWORTH.

LAMB, J. P. *Commercial and technical libraries*. (Allen and Unwin, 21s.).

Almost forty years ago the first commercial library was opened in Glasgow and although, since then, most large public library systems have introduced separate commercial and technical departments, the literature of the subject is surprisingly sparse. One of the main protagonists of commercial and technical libraries is Mr. J. P. Lamb who, in Sheffield, has created a technical service to local industry probably unsurpassed by any other public library.

His present book commences with an excellent summary of the history of public commercial and technical libraries. These have long been regarded as a trump card in the game of obtaining financial recognition by the Government but from the days of the Library Association's Technical and Commercial Libraries Special Committee to the more recent Advisory Council on Scientific Policy their contribution to the economic life of the country has gone largely unrecognised. The book attempts to analyse some of the reasons why this is so.

Much of the material on the various aspects of commercial and technical libraries, such as furniture, staff, stock, organisation and external activities is of general application, and an opportunity seems to have been lost of discussing more specific problems and in putting forward new ideas. Mr. Lamb is no mere theoretician, but his approach is mainly that of an administrator and the more detailed, but nevertheless important, issues are avoided. He is much more at home with technical libraries than commercial. A dozen pages are devoted to a somewhat indecisive discourse on the Dewey numbers most appropriate to a commercial library (333.6 but not 333.7, 334.2 but not 334.8, 338.5 but not 338.6, etc.), whilst the classification of trade directories and the attempts made by such publishers as Kompass to give a complete analysis of firms' products is ignored. Little help is given in the selection of directories, and basic sources such as the catalogues of the Adressbuchverleger—Verband and the *Industrial Marketing Directory* do not even get a mention. Although a number of book selection aids are given for the technical library, the commercial librarian is left in the dark as to how to collect his material, which is much more diffuse and for which

THE THURLOE SERIES

*of special library
editions——ideal
for travelling
libraries*

Arts and Crafts
Cycling Tourist Guides
Electrical
Engineering
Gardening
Pets and Livestock
Modelling, etc.
Modelling, Railways
Photography
Wireless and
Television
Juveniles and
Elementary Readers

*Catalogues and Samples on
request*

OPPENHEIM & Co. Ltd.

*Library and Wholesale
Booksellers*

25, THURLOE STREET,
SOUTH KENSINGTON,
LONDON, S.W.7.

Telephone :
Kensington 6807 & 9431

THE HOLT-JACKSON BOOK COMPANY LIMITED



*Public and County
Library Booksellers*



MONTAUBAN
CHAMBERS,
ST. ANNES-ON-SEA,
LANCS.

Telephone: St. Annes 575



London Showroom:
59, BRITTON STREET,
CLERKENWELL ROAD, E.C.1
Telephone: Clerkenwell 3250.

The British National Bibliography is of limited use. Similarly with maps and plans, we are told "no rules can be laid down," but surely a great deal more could be said about the demands of commerce and something more definite on map provision, perhaps along the lines indicated by Mr. de Paris, could usefully have been included. The vertical file is practically ignored, although there is a lukewarm reference to the clippings file as "an effective library showpiece." Nothing is given about the treatment of small pamphlets and those odd stencilled sheets which are often such an essential source of current commercial information. The author would appear to favour a general information index on cards rather than a clippings file, but there is little consideration of the type of information which can be usefully clipped as distinct from that which it is more appropriate to index. From some of the titles cited it would appear that the work has been some time in preparation although it is inexcusable to describe Bradshaw's *Continental Guide* as the best known continental timetable.

Away from such mundane matters, Mr. Lamb shines—graduates, women librarians, documentation, metropolitan libraries—here we are with the man we know, witty, forceful and very good reading. In conclusion, there is a masterly summary of present and future prospects for the technical library which only seem to heighten the general unevenness of the book.

A. L. SMYTH.

Berkshire Bookbinding Co., Ltd.

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS

NON - FICTION AND
REFERENCE BINDINGS
ARE OUR SPECIALITY

27, ELDON TERRACE
READING, BERKS.

Telephone: Reading 60688.

The Publishers of KEESING'S
at home
Southport, Stand No. 17

CRAMERS *for MUSIC*

MUSICAL LITERATURE
AND MUSIC BINDING

139, New Bond Street
London, W.1

★ Special Music Enquiry Bureau

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 48. NO. 10

OCTOBER, 1955

CORRESPONDENCE

THE FUTURE OF THE A.A.L.

The President replies to two letters in the August issue:

The first (and unpublished) part of my Address was compiled only after very careful reference to notes in *The Library Assistant*, *Library Notes* and the *Library Association Record*, of both the A.A.L. and L.A. Meetings, records of meetings between representatives of the L.A. and the A.A.L., and L.A. Council Minutes, and I drew careful attention to the various occasions on which the Library Association had, as Mr. Gardner puts it, given the A.A.L. opportunity to commit suicide. Since the war negotiations between the two bodies were opened once again, in an effort to solve the problem. These negotiations petered out through either the unwillingness or inability of the representatives to find a common ground for discussion, and the state of *laissez-faire* continues.

I also made a disclaimer in my opening paragraph, in which I said that the President should speak without fear or favour, that he should be allowed to express his own opinions. I added, "What I have to say does not in any way reflect the considered opinions of the Council. The opinions and conclusions are my own."

My proposals, which Mr. Gardner considers "lacking in both wisdom and statesmanship," were put forward to encourage discussion among the membership, to try and produce new ideas, and although part of them may be considered destructive of the present amalgamation, this part should not obscure the constructive suggestions put forward. These proposals, made in a provocative but constructive spirit, are, I maintain, worthy of some serious consideration. Mr. Hutchings statement of the decline and fall of the A.A.L. was widely circulated in Yorkshire. It was destructive, and because I respect Mr. Hutchings as one of the most progressive members of the L.A. Council, I felt that I should fire a counter-blast when the opportunity offered itself. Perhaps Mr. Gardner considers Hutchings' statement silly also and not worthy of consideration?

His letter makes reference to the large A.A.L. membership and suggests that a mere tick on a piece of paper is the reason for this. Is this a reply to my statement that the Library Association membership would not be so large if it did not compel members to join before they could sit the L.A. examinations?

* * *

I am very disappointed to be so misunderstood by Miss Jepson, and it has taken me three weeks to pluck up enough courage to reply! My faith in the fair sex is shaken, because I so carefully prepared my question at the G.L.D. Annual General Meeting and recorded Miss Jepson's reply almost verbatim. Now I am accused of "shamefully mis-quoting." I

remember, too, after the meeting, thanking her for giving me the reply which I frankly admitted was the reply that I had hoped for.

Perhaps I should have omitted the lady's name. One is never too old to learn. Miss Jepson, please accept my apologies for the distress and anger I caused you.

J. S. BRISTOW.

* * *

Mr. Milton's letter (in the August issue) exemplifies, I am afraid, the misconception which many librarians have of the trade union side of their profession and the respective roles of the L.A. and NALGO. While respecting your editorial admonition "to avoid going once more over familiar ground," there are one or two points in Mr. Milton's letter which, I feel, call for comment. He thinks that "to leave all negotiations with our employers in the hands of NALGO is an intolerable dereliction of duty and tantamount to professional suicide," but what else can we do? NALGO is our trade union and is the only body qualified to negotiate for us. The L.A., through the Joint Consultative Committee, can make recommendations and give advice on service conditions, as they affect the profession, to the staff side of the National Joint Council, but, by its constitution the L.A. cannot negotiate directly with our employers.

The answer Mr. Milton suggests is a separate association formed from the A.A.L. Since it is to be a negotiating body it would have to be independent of the L.A., hence another subscription (the S.M.C.C.L. collects one from each of its members); and to what avail? We should still have to negotiate through the National Joint Council, and since we should be too small a body to be allotted a seat on the Council, our negotiators would remain precisely the same—our sole advantage would appear to be representation on the Joint Consultative Committee, in addition, of course, to the L.A. representation.

Mr. Milton states that in an association as large and all-embracing as NALGO we are too small a minority to make our special wants known, and we are bound to be swamped by other groups of local government officers. It is a truism that what we get out of any association is proportionate to what we put into it. Unless members of the profession are prepared to support NALGO, they cannot expect NALGO to be particularly concerned about their special needs or problems. On NALGO Branch Executive Committees the Libraries Department has equal representation with all other departments. If the members elected take their share of the committee work and take an interest in the welfare of their colleagues in Local Government, I believe their colleagues will take an interest in them and in their special problems. My own feeling is that the A.A.L. could do a most useful job by acting as a liaison between members who are also active NALGO members and officers of the L.A., so that action on any particular matter could be co-related and pressed, on the one hand through the L.A. and the Joint Consultative Committee, and on the other through individual representatives at local and district level.

E. W. MOXEY,

Chief Assistant, Wallasey P.L.

I suppose that the teachers' professional association to which Mr. Milton refers is the National Union of Teachers, the strongest among several teachers' associations. The N.U.T. provides *inter alia* for its members, of whom students pay no subscription, advice about study and

courses, and for all teachers an appointments service aiming at matching available posts with potential applicants' qualifications. It is not an examining body. The nearest equivalents to the L.A. in the teaching profession are surely the College of Preceptors and the Royal Society of Teachers, though only the Ministry of Education can certify teachers as qualified, so that no professional association can, like the L.A., virtually compel most members of the profession to join.

An examination of other professions would no doubt illuminate the proper organisation of the library profession, and the proper function of the L.A. Do physicians, architects, and organists organise associations apart from the B.M.A., R.I.B.A. and R.C.O. for defending their social and economic status, and in each case how much discussion of professional *techniques* occurs in the meetings and journals of the licensing body and how much in those of the defence association; and which members of the profession pay subscriptions to the former?

Unprotected by prestige, librarians need surely an association independent of the L.A. (which could appropriately propagate theories and methods), an association concerned not primarily with examinations and licensing, but with professional welfare, to secure for librarians conditions of employment comparable with those secured by the N.U.T. for teachers.

Such an association could aim:—

(a) to negotiate salary scales:—

- (i) that all employers must pay at least;
- (ii) that do not depend on each employer's grading of jobs;
- (iii) that provide for appropriate increments for degrees, diplomas and certificates— unless such increments would discourage the appointment of persons entitled to them;
- (iv) that provide increments in respect of time spent performing National Service.

(b) to negotiate one superannuation scheme for all librarians, in order to facilitate movement between public, university, special and other libraries.

(c) to provide for librarians their own insurance schemes, which could surely be at least as advantageous as those of the Teachers' Provident Society and the Teachers' Assurance Company.

(d) to run an appointments bureau with an advisory service.

Librarianship, if less strenuous and time-consuming (once all exams. are passed) than teaching, requires more copious and more advanced technical knowledge, that deserves more remuneration than it now receives. Public ignorance of the knowledge and skill possessed and applied by librarians depresses our salaries, while we suffer, like all public servants except civil servants, from people's unwillingness to pay rates sufficient to remunerate local government officers or taxes sufficient to reward university staffs, whereas people blindly pay the concealed charges that amply remunerate business men. Perhaps we need a link with the state, before we can enjoy a salary system comparable with teachers' Burnham scales. Certainly we need to enlighten the public about our work. Indubitably we need a union for professional welfare, and licensing bodies such as the L.A. now is, are hardly suitable for defending us against depreciation of real wages in this century of inflation.

D. W. HOPE,

Assistant, Northumberland Co. L.

TALKING ABOUT READING.

The August Editorial in explanation and apology for the article on Thomas Wolfe betrayed a determination to preserve the dignity of the large number of librarians who are incapable of enjoying any literature of a standard higher than the best-seller novel. It also suggested a perfectly valid reason for publishing criticism.

The article on Thomas Wolfe was an unfortunate beginning if it was an example of what you intend. Anyone who has an interest in literature has read the same material over and over within the last ten years. Anyone who is not interested would pay as much attention to the article as to a poem.

The possibility that should be explored is that there could be such a thing as Library Criticism. That experts in reading and reading tastes should not be able to criticise literature from the angle of the reader's adviser is probable, but why ape the literary critic until we have explored the possibilities of our own speciality? There are enough readership surveys and social analyses in existence to provide a firm basis for work in the subject.

As an example of what I mean, the article on Wolfe neglected completely the point that he wrote pages and pages that play no part in the plot, are very hard to read, and would put a majority of fiction readers off Thomas Wolfe and make them horribly suspicious of any further recommendations we might make.

L. B. HOENE,
Acton P.L.

PLAIN WORDS.

Might a plea be made that contributors to the *Assistant Librarian* read the admirable book by Sir Ernest Gowers entitled *Plain words*. On the first page appears the following: "Nay, does the writer himself always know just what he means? Even when he knows what he means, and says it in a way that is clear to him, is it always equally clear to his reader?" Of late the articles and letters in the *Assistant* have been getting less clear, visibility at times being almost zero. One does not

expect basic English, although that would be preferable to some of the tortuous and laboured sentences which have been inflicted upon us. And an unusual word is always preferred to the familiar—one can almost imagine contributors writing with a Thesaurus in one hand, translating from the commonplace into the fancy.

This tendency to the fanciful has been prevalent for some time, reaching its peak with the article "View of the Final Examination" in the August issue. I had intended answering the article in question, but upon second and third reading I was not sure whether I agreed or disagreed with the views expressed!

It must be admitted that this plea for plainer words is not entirely unselfish. If this taste for the fanciful is allowed to flourish unhindered (you see how easy it is to be trapped!), the time will come when I shall have to turn to the cover to see whether I am reading the *Assistant* or the *Record*.

E. W. CHAPMAN,
*Senior Assistant, Canning Town
Branch, West Ham P.L.*

COMMERCIAL AND TECHNICAL.

I am grateful to Mr. Smyth for pointing out the deplorable error about Bradshaw's *Continental Guide* in my book *Commercial and Technical Libraries*. The reference was correct when written in 1938, but somehow slipped unchallenged through succeeding checks, possibly because the *Guide* had so long been familiar to older librarians. He is quite right, too, on several other points. The book had a long gestation, interrupted by six years of war work, two years' hard labour on the Copyright Committee, and my own insistence that my system's efficiency must take precedence over any book. It was born with difficulty: the compositor's mental balance was upset in the later stages. I must confess, too, that my experience makes me more "at home" with the technical library, and, as he says, I am an administrator of libraries, not a departmental specialist.

Having thus, in the current jargon, indulged in my bout of self-criticism, I

begin to entertain a perhaps unworthy thought that Mr. Smyth himself might benefit from this chastening exercise. Am I right in sensing behind his criticisms a belief that the Commercial Information Service is all that really matters? Had he been building up a Commercial Library, rather than a Commercial Information Department, he might, I hope, have found the discussion of the subjects to be included in the book stock more important than details of individual sources and the odd scraps of information which every information officer collects from the most unlikely sources, and uses or discards according to the needs of his enquiries. I fear I cannot share his view that the vertical file, familiar to every office boy for nearly half a century, deserved detailed mention. Surely we can assume that every librarian and assistant knows about these things. In my innocence, I imagined that I had presented the case for and against the clippings file quite adequately on page 226. Certainly I might have aired my views on what I would include in such a file and what I would merely index, but what use would it have been to a librarian facing very different problems in another city? Over and over again I insisted on the inevitable and proper divergencies in practice in the few commercial and technical libraries in existence, differences wisely based on the pragmatic approach librarians bring to their service to readers. I fear that many young men in libraries to-day are too prone to try to create a mystique out of gadgets.

Mr. Smyth's review makes me wonder whether the specialist is not too near his subject, or perhaps a little too engrossed in his enthusiasms, to deal broadly with a branch of librarianship so dependent on factors often peculiar to one library and rarely common to all. It may be that, after all, the administrator can hold the balance more justly: his vision may be clearer because it is not distorted by enlarging objects near at hand out of relation to their true value.

J. P. LAMB,
City Librarian, Sheffield.

Berkshire Bookbinding Co., Ltd.

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS

NON - FICTION AND
REFERENCE BINDINGS
ARE OUR SPECIALITY

27, ELDON TERRACE
READING, BERKS.

Telephone: Reading 60688.

CHIEFTAIN

GOATSKIN

**HIGH QUALITY
LEATHER**

with an
Even Natural
Grain.

**ACID
RESISTING**

Guaranteed
to withstand
the
P.I.R.A. TEST

HARD WEARING
Supplied in
15 Standard
Shades

**SELECTIONS
FOR ALL
STYLES OF
BOOKBINDING**

J. HEWITT & SONS LTD.

Tanners and Leather Dressers
125 HIGH STREET, EDINBURGH 1
50 ST. JOHN STREET, LONDON, E.C.1

SCOTTISH LIBRARY ASSOCIATION SUMMER SCHOOL JULY 2nd—9th, 1955

"Newbattle? Never heard of it. Dalkeith—where's that? Oh, Edinburgh, why didn't you say so? What, the Scottish Library Association? I thought that had died out years ago!"

Such was the reaction I got when I announced how I would be spending some of my annual leave. And now I am very glad, because the less people are interested in the Summer School at Newbattle Abbey, the more chance I have of getting in next year, and if the proceedings come up to this year's standard, I shall indeed have cause for rejoicing. But of course they will, they always do, judging by the appreciative comments of repeating students, though the weather is not always as obliging as it was this year! It only rained on Sunday, for the 'bus tour, and it cleared in time for us to get a good view of the Forth Bridge and Fife, Kingdom of.

The inaugural address on the Sunday evening was given in the crypt as the classroom was so cold, and I wrote home for my winter woollies. When lectures began on Monday morning the weather had taken a turn for the better, and as the week progressed I became more and more thankful that there was no one at home to send them on. It was a big temptation to skip lectures, but it was worth resisting, for the galaxy of sixteen stars assembled for our edification shone no less brightly for the competition provided by the sun outside. Those who attended did so willingly, expectantly, and they were not disappointed.

To detail all the highlights would take too long, but Mr. Tyler deserves a specially big hand for making Bliss comprehensible after an hour of bliss listening to Mr. Clark in the sun-soaked garden, and a medal, for keeping his audience awake. The combined effects of good food, warm sunshine, and the loss of certain articles of clothing did not visibly deter him, and the notes I took are still intelligible now, while his words, alas, grow dimmer.

Apart from lectures, which themselves made the course worth the effort of attending, we learnt much from librarians from Switzerland, Canada, the West Indies, New Zealand and Australia, and Mr. Purdie and Mr. Gardner gave talks on their experiences in the United States, and India and Denmark, respectively. The visits to Edinburgh Central Public Library and the Scottish Central Library were impressive, to the liftman as well as to the thirty odd (sic) students who went. The last item on the agenda, a demonstration of interview technique, nearly ended in disaster when the students, as Committee, showed signs of wanting to elect the wrong man, but by a bit of smart counting by the Chairman, Mr. Scobbie, the right man was elected by one vote. We all agreed that we had learnt much not included in the L.A. syllabus.

Our one regret was that time was too short—the lecturers had us begging for more, and we only became truly acquainted on the last night of all. And take it from me, the night life at Newbattle Abbey has to be heard to be believed. If you are at all fond of a peaceful night's sleep, if you anticipate living to a ripe old age, on your O.A.P. and superannuation, don't go to Newbattle when the S.L.A. Summer School is in session. Leave it to me. I will be there.

(And so, I understand, will the hero of the plot, Mr. Cockburn, Deputy Librarian, Edinburgh P.L., from whom further details will not, I hope, be available).

SHEILA WHITE.

NOTICE OF ELECTION

Nominations are invited for the following Officers and Councillors of the Association for the year 1956:

Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Editor, and six nationally elected Councillors.

Nominations must be made in writing by two or more members of the Association, countersigned by the nominee, and reach me not later than 15th October, 1955.

E. E. MOON,
Honorary Secretary.

CENTRAL LIBRARY,
DUKE'S AVENUE,
CHISWICK, LONDON, W.4.

WHO'S WHO IN THE A.A.L.—3.

WILLSON, Eleanor Joan, F.L.A., F.R.H.S., Chief Assistant and Chief Cataloguer, Hammersmith Public Libraries (Carnegie Central Library, Brook Green Road, London, W.6). Address: 30, Chepstow Villas, London, W.11. Born 1915. Unmarried. Appointments: Assistant, St. Marylebone Public Library, 1935-40; Assistant, subsequently Senior Branch Cataloguer, then Central Lending Librarian, Hammersmith Public Libraries, 1940-50. Associations: A.A.L.: National Councillor since 1950; Chairman of Services and Conditions Committee, 1949-50; Chairman of the Council, 1953-4; Honorary Secretary of G.L.D., 1945-49. L.A.: London Branch Councillor; Member of London and Home Counties Branch Committee since 1953. S.C.E.L.: Member since its inception, Honorary Secretary 1950. A.A.L. Correspondence Tutor. Special interests: Gardening, local history, sitting on committees.

[Miss Willson has been elected by Council to be Vice-President for 1956. September Council Notes will appear in the November issue].

CRAMERS *for* MUSIC

MUSICAL LITERATURE
AND MUSIC BINDING

139, New Bond Street
London, W.1

★ Special Music Enquiry Bureau

Rhode Island Compliments

"We take pride in this valuable Reference Tool," writes the State Librarian at Providence,

—and we, at KEESINGS take pride in the fact that our documentation of Current Affairs pulls its weight just as much in the smallest State of the U.S.A., as, for instance, in California, one hundred and fifty times its size.

CHAPMAN MORTIMER

by A. P. SHEARMAN

THE NOVELS of Chapman Mortimer are fantastic: in them you will find little that relates to your own world or problems; instead there is a startling, unusual and vivid world where nothing is certain and everything contradictable; an escape world which has the effect of making the everyday world seem more interesting when you come back to it. At the same time these novels are realistically contemporary, both in their attitude and approach to life, and one feels about them, as John Lehmann puts it in *The year's work in literature*, 1949: "a secret connivance for creations of our own time . . . the tonic effect (of) an entirely new book (which) derives, in part at least, from the sensation that the experience of one's own time has somehow been enlarged, perfected and made permanent." There is indeed this enlargement, polish—if not perfection—and in addition an exciting quality which leads one to hope that these novels may have a permanence that will last longer than most novels published in the fifties.

The author was born William Charles Chapman-Mortimer, in 1907; was educated privately and married in 1934. Apart from a book of children's verses ("written for fun"), and a story, "The Runner," in *Botteghe Oscure*, his published work has all been in novel form. The first, *A stranger on the stair*, was published by Hart-Davis and went into a second impression the month it appeared, March, 1950. A third impression followed in May. It is most interesting now as an introduction to what was to come: it showed the author's clear ability to tell a compelling and essentially simple story in an undeniably original manner. Francis Wyndham describes it in *The year's work in literature*, 1950: "(It) is short and concentrated . . . the construction is careful, and it has formal beauty." He goes on to criticize it briefly: "The essential truth of the situation is obscured by a certain affectation of style . . . (it) may have been over-polished and its raw material over-refined." The manner of telling the story is of importance to Mr. Mortimer and the whole sequence of events in this book is told to the "stranger" by Edouard, an artist to whose strange flat the "stair" spirals; and while the fact that he could continue talking throughout the novel and in Mr. Mortimer's lively prose as well, seems credible at the time of reading, there are substantial doubts afterwards. The major criticism is that the atmosphere is laid on too thickly at times so that you begin to question it. There is a suspicion of melodrama—which heaven forbid!—that spoils the particular effect Mr. Mortimer is making. Despite this, here is the classically shaped story to be found in the later novels; and here the background (it can only be Paris, though it is never stated) of *Young men waiting*.

Father Goose came in 1951, again from Hart-Davis. It was awarded the James Tait Black prize in 1952. The description of it by Raymond Mortimer in the *Sunday Times* (18.3.51) is excellent: "I think that Mr. Mortimer reveals his personal quality and this is conspicuously original. So much so that I am flummoxed: I know how much I like its flavour, but never have I had a book so difficult to describe. . . . I am confident that *Father Goose* will be enjoyed by some of my friends—but by which? I foresee furious and futile discussions all over the country: "It's delicious!" "It's pointless!" "Have you no imagination!" "You only pretend to like it," etc. . . . The circumstances in which (the stories) are

told, shimmer with fantasy . . . the author seems to invent for the love of inventing." The book is composed of two long stories told by two narrators (with the help of other agencies from time to time) linked by the audience and by complementary themes—the effect of magic in one, of mystery in the other. This audience is in no way the passive means to create the illusion of a story within a story, which perhaps the stranger was in the first novel. John Owl, Bluey and Father Goose are surely the strangest and most remarkable audience any storyteller can have had. You are never told who they are, what they are or where they come from; and once the initial bewilderment has passed you accept that they have come, miraculously, from the author's head (and heart). Moreover they can form in your imagination as most real characters do, and it does not matter that they have no features, shape or origin. Certain it is anyway that Johnnie and Bluey are small or perhaps of average height, in comparison with *Father Goose*. About him we are told two things in the text. Bluey says: "No, he's not a scholar. He's just a giant"; and shortly after, "He's more than just a bit big whatever else he may be . . . He's over twelve feet high—sometimes more than that." Maybe Bluey can be forgiven his wild imagination for the wonderful enormousness his picture suggests: a featureless (but not unkind) Father figure and like G. K. Chesterton, only far bigger.

The stories are set in India where the extraordinary events they retail are at least likely: anyone who has read Kipling or *A passage to India* will be able to read *Father Goose* with his disbelief more readily suspended. Mr. Mortimer himself comments on this question of likelihood: "The probability of a story," said Father Goose pompously, "depends entirely on how you tell it." As in the earlier novel, the style was straightforward and again there were the tiny paragraphs, often of only one sentence. One reviewer found this trying: and it may be a result of the "over-polishing, over-refining." It does, however, speed up the rate of reading so that a particular emotion or effect is built up rapidly and effectively. Once or twice he is too conscious of his responsibility as a storyteller, and on one page he makes his characters worry about economy of words which they proceed to count. This kind of interruption tends to create annoyance rather than the necessary impatience which all storytellers try to elicit; though doubtless it is interesting for the professional critic to read that "counting words is a silly way of looking at literature." For all these faults this was surely a most accomplished second novel.

The third novel was *Young men waiting*, published this time by the Cresset Press, in 1952. It is not a wholly successful book, though it is ambitious and stimulating. The surface reality is more concrete than in the other two books—the café, the street and the world of the art student. The atmosphere is applied more expertly and with greater sparseness—experience gained in writing *Father Goose* perhaps. The inner reality is wilder and less familiar still—the more so for the sharpness of the exterior world. The stranger appears again—this time an effeminate young man with a dog—and plays a more engaged part in the novel than did his predecessors in the others. The action follows from what the young man is and not from what he does; it is the fact not only that he is a stranger, but also a strange one in a city of strangers that leads Paco, Bull and O'Connell to become discontented with waiting. Edwin Muir wrote a penetrating top page review in the *Observer* (16.11.52): "Inside the solid shapes of the characters, there is a busy swarm of private fancies, prejudices, distorted responses to life; a confused turmoil of unformulated emotion. But there is no communication or rather no

explicit communication: the words these solid shapes utter never matter . . . (the author) has a curious and searching imagination, an insight into the blind tumults of that incommunicably private part of our lives which the novelist rarely touches. He makes us see things which we find it wise or expedient to ignore. Nevertheless he would have moved us in a different way if he had made his characters articulate. It is hard to sympathise with feelings that cannot utter themselves, for utterance is a kind of freedom. And perhaps it is a simpler matter than Mr. Mortimer will allow."

It would be interesting to try to answer that last criticism by giving the book to a number of people, with some sensitivity, who have to eat out regularly alone, in the evening at a café. For them there is no communication, no freedom, and it might prove that they have a considerable sympathy for the emotion expressed in *Young men waiting*. Apart from that reservation, however, the criticism is a legitimate one. J. W. Lambert in the *Sunday Times* (23.11.52) wrote: "Mr. Mortimer has an excessive fondness for expressive dots . . . his prose as such, of course, is perfectly straightforward,, but he always seems to be looking for more than can meet the clearest eye; and in (this book) sometimes sees double in the process. It establishes a singular talent still more firmly, though in itself it leaves a sense of baffled disappointment." A comment here is that the clearest eye cannot see the mystery and the strangeness that lies behind the human personality and the physical world, and that it is perhaps the penalty Mr. Mortimer pays for attempting a vision few novelists contemplate that his imaginative eye plays him false occasionally. All the same it is a disappointing book and perhaps the fault was not so much in Mr. Mortimer as in what he was trying to tell us. The dots of course left unsaid those things it was not necessary to say and again helped to speed up the action of the book—a most necessary device when most of the time is spent in waiting. As a novel of motives, obscure and entangled motives, it is original and unusual; as a novel of ideas it is a distinguished failure.

Mediterraneo was published in March, 1955, by the Cresset Press. It is a return to Father Goose and his two friends with a different scene as the title suggests, and with "bigger and better" technical methods of meeting the problems of storytelling. There is one story only this time, told in the same powerful, readable style and with a most enjoyable hero: Antonio Santiago Gomez. It may be that the vividness of his characterisation is the result of the continually debating, quarrelling "voices" inside Antonio. Students of literature will have learnt about the internal monologue which Joyce and Virginia Woolf used. Here is the internal dialogue, humorous, revealing and sometimes quite out of control of its owner. Poor Antonio has a nagging wife and a scolding mother-in-law inside his head, spurring him to action—he is naturally inclined to laziness—and to heroic deeds—he is not particularly brave either, contrary to popular imagination: for people think that gitanos are violent men, reckless and indifferent to their personal safety. Indeed, Antonio's murdered brother was such a one.

While this gitano is working out his troubles, Father Goose, Bluey and Johnny are having a holiday on a ship which is travelling (and is also stationary) along the Spanish coast about five miles out to sea. The three figures are just as argumentative and yet they remain inscrutably the same. Father Goose is most uncomfortable in his bunk, but this tells us nothing more than that he is still as big. Bluey is still insatiably hungry for a story and it is a debatable point whether he invents the drama of Antonio or whether he knows about it. Spain is the "scene juste," to

coin a phrase, for Mr. Mortimer, as was India. May he not exhaust parts of the world where fantasy is a natural element like air and water!

The newspaper strike occurred shortly after the book came out, and the reviews of it that appeared afterwards were of necessity brief. The *Listener* was not affected, however, and Sean O'Faolain wrote in it (3.3.55): "Mr. Chapman Mortimer's *Mediterraneo* is an outstanding book. The Common Reader will probably think it stylized and affected and it is a little stylized; but Mr. Mortimer is not posing, he is not writing as he does just to be clever, he knows what he is doing and with two rather grave qualifications [when he 'breaks the form badly'] it all builds up neatly and hangs together firmly, and we are left with a vivid sense of people, place and personality . . . it is an imperfect book, but my goodness, it shines like a rare, bright star through the thousand and one nights called 'Current Fiction.'"

If Mr. O'Faolain means by affectation and stylization a concern for technique and the presentation of the story rather than the story itself, then this is the criticism of all Mr. Mortimer's critics, and it is an interesting one. For while a story may be entertaining, even gripping, it is generally agreed that the story which has an additional quality such as the viewpoint or the morality or the style, is the better story. One may be a work of craftsmanship, the other a work of art. A demonstration of this would be to compare a representative long short story by Somerset Maugham, and *The Old man and the sea* by Ernest Hemingway. Mr. Mortimer's stories have the additional quality without doubt: but one can question whether he is not over conscious of the need for it and in his employment of it; and if he can integrate the purpose of his storytelling with the story itself, his development will be interesting and exciting.

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR BINDING

FICTION

In Full Rexine with new reinforced unsewn binding our "Standard Fiction Binding" is the most economic in the country.

JUVENILE "FLATS"

We can solve the problems of this class of work with an almost unbreakable binding that has been proved in Libraries, and that we have evolved for all flat ephemeral work at a reasonable price.

NON FICTION AND MUSIC

A rexine spine with waterproof cloth plus a new and greatly improved joint will give hard and long wear to all volumes at a very moderate range of prices.

We will be very happy to rebind any volumes published in any unsewn binding other than spiral bindings.

We must emphasise that we guarantee all work undertaken by us in any process against fair wear and tear and Library usage

ALL ENQUIRIES WELCOME AT
BENLOCK LIMITED

SOUTH BANK · MIDDLESBROUGH · YORKS.

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 48. NO. 11

NOVEMBER, 1955

EDITORIAL

AT ONE TIME during the stormy Annual General Meeting of the Library Association (reported on page 179), it seemed that the motion which has since been the subject of a postal ballot would result in splitting the Association in an unprecedented manner—authority members and the majority of chief librarians on the one hand, the L.A. Council and the A.A.L. on the other. That authority representatives should have supported the views of their own Association of Municipal Corporations was not surprising. That chief librarians should also have opposed the Council's motion must be attributed in part to self-interest (however subconscious), in part to a natural timidity in opposing their own chairmen, and in part, as Mr. Smith points out, to a genuine but inexcusable confusion as to their status—as “delegates” or as individuals—at the A.G.M. of their Association. Some, of course, must be given credit for voting according to their consciences.

That the split, when it came, was less keen than at first seemed likely was due to the fortuitous circumstances that the last two speakers before the vote was taken were a chief librarian and an authority member, both of whom spoke strongly in support of the motion. Our concern here is with the role of the A.A.L. We have most often shown our strength in the past by preventing the Library Association from taking action to our (and hence to its) detriment. We have had little enough opportunity of using our strength to force through a progressive Council motion against the opposition of other interests within the L.A. Whatever the outcome of the postal vote, we have now demonstrated our willingness to do so.

But had the motion at the A.G.M. been won, manifestly by the unholy alliance of L.A. Council with A.A.L., our triumph might well have been purchased at the cost of increased friction within the Library Association structure. There is always a danger that we may seem to employ superior numbers rather than superior arguments. The equality in voting power between an inexperienced assistant in his teens and a chief librarian of long standing which we guard so jealously, is open to abuse if fully exploited by an organization so powerful as the A.A.L. It is far better that a member who does not fully understand the issues involved in any particular motion before him should abstain from voting, than that he should vote at the behest of a more experienced colleague, whether a chief librarian or an officer of the A.A.L.

It is the duty of each member to see that he is aware of the issues involved whenever his vote is called for; it is our duty to see that the arguments are fairly placed before him. On this occasion we are confident that this was done. As a responsible body, we must constantly resist the temptation to regard our massed voting strength as a bulldozer, instead of as an army of individually wielded picks and shovels.

DISPLAY DISCUSSION

It was suggested at the Birmingham Conference that a "Display of the Month" should be published in the *Assistant Librarian*. For a number of reasons this has proved impractical, but we offer instead, by way of experiment, a "Display Discussion" which might well become a regular feature.

Mr. C. A. Elliott, Chief Librarian of Islington, has kindly co-operated by allowing us to use as the basis of this first discussion a display prepared at Islington on The Use and Abuse of Books, and has supplied some explanatory notes on the display, its purpose and its effect. These, together with the illustration here reproduced, have been submitted to three "experts" who were among those responsible for the Birmingham Conference. They have been asked to comment quite frankly on the display, indicating its good points and its shortcomings. They have not compared notes, a fact which adds significance to those points on which they find themselves in agreement.

When you have examined the display and considered their comments, why not continue the discussion in our correspondence columns?

USE AND ABUSE.

MR. ELLIOTT writes: This display was designed a few years ago by the present Deputy Librarian, Mr. A. W. Wright, and was intended to ram home the message we had often preached: "Please take care of your books."

Like all displays, this one must be assessed in relation to its position and according to facilities available and the purpose intended. In our case the display was assembled in the vestibule of the Central Library, in our illuminated show case measuring approximately 9ft. in length by 6ft. in height and 12ins. deep. The doors of the show case divide the display into three parts and the generous strip lighting, with which the case is fitted, serves to attract the attention of all who enter the building.

The left hand portion of the display, "Always Use Books," shows a selection of technical and informatial books and *dust jackets* together with subject lists which are regularly produced in Islington.

The central section consists of the message as shown in the upper portion with, below, printed publications we want to continue to provide such as the monthly *Bulletin*, *The Young Reader*, *Fact and Fiction*, *The Reference News Sheet*, the brochure *Your Favourite Authors* and *Technical News Sheets*. The central bottom section shows the items we want to avoid, e.g., overdue cards and letters. Hand printed show cards emphasise the message in each case.

The right hand portion of the display consists of books that have been damaged by readers and their dogs. We have a good collection of chewed books, and books damaged by tea? stains and cigarette burns as well as those with covers spotted by rain. This gruesome collection is surprisingly effective, en masse, in attracting attention, and we always have a good audience for this particular display.

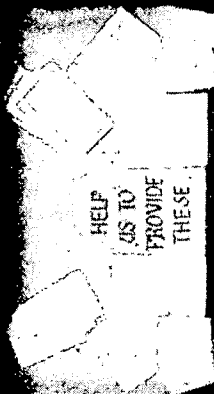
From comments made by members of the public we know that this and other displays (each of which has a fortnight's run) are well appreciated. We think it significant that during the last few years we have been much less worried by damaged books. Our readers are taking more care of the books they borrow. Whether this is general or whether it is partly a result of the display, we do not know. We shall perhaps get more information when we send this particular display to the branches.

ALWAYS
USE
BOOKS



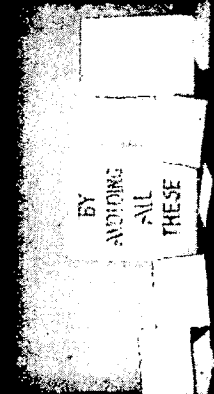
NEW YEAR
RESOLUTIONS

RETURN OR RENEW THEM
BOOKS
PRIORITY

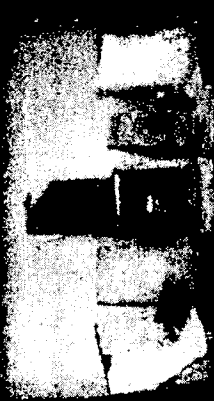


HELP
US TO
PROVIDE
THESE

BY
AVOIDING
ALL
THESE



DONT
ABUSE
BOOKS



G. W. HARRIS *comments*: Since it is designed to be looked at rather than handled, this display may be regarded as a kind of outsized poster in three-D and, therefore, to a great extent it may be judged by the criteria used to assess the effectiveness of a poster. The whole purpose of a poster—the reason for its being—is to put over to the public, as simply as possible, a single idea or message about which the authors are trying to arouse public interest and action. It follows, then, that a poster, or (your reviewer maintains) a display, should have a single, simple theme, eye-catching and boldly-stated, with detail and wordiness reduced to a minimum.

The simple theme, Islington's display has; also it is stated boldly. "Always use books—Don't abuse books" is a catch-phrase with sufficient ring about it to be remembered; and, no doubt, the new books, old books and library publications make an eye-catching, colourful mass, calculated to arouse curiosity in the casual observer. Had it stopped there, it would have been almost impossible to fault this aspect of the display, but the theme must be solitary as well as simple; and this, unfortunately, it is not.

The self-confessed and laudable aim of the Islington staff was "to ram home the message we had often preached: 'Please take care of your books.'" Why, then, overwhelm this single theme with pleas for the prompt return of books? Surely, here is material for another display. Also, is it fair to equate the writing of overdue notices with the preparation of book lists and a personal service to readers? These separate tasks would seem to be the work of very different grades of staff, but perhaps the point passed unnoticed by readers. In any case the display is too encumbered with captions already. Wordy captions should be avoided wherever possible, but if they are included, then they should be of a size which can be read at a distance of several paces.

Other details open to criticism are: the arrangement of some of the book lists close to the underside of some of the shelves: it is doubtful whether these, particularly those on the bottom left, could be seen comfortably from a standing position; also, the lettering, though bold, is uninspired; but these are minor criticisms.

In summary, then, the primary idea of the display is good, but it has suffered from the introduction of the secondary one. Although the "overdue" theme is hardly less important than the "care of books" theme, it was a mistake to mix the two. Incidentally, it should be noticed that it is in the "overdue" section that most of the wordy captions occur. The display might have been better had the "overdue" theme been omitted altogether and the captions of the main theme moved to the central section of the display. It is suggested that all the lettering necessary is:

USE BOOKS

DON'T ABUSE BOOKS

Every year many books
are misused or damaged
by readers

However, it is easier to criticize than to create and, despite anything that has been written here, those responsible for the Islington display deserve praise for their attempt to say in a graphic and undoubtedly more effective way, something which is usually dismissed with a peremptory notice. Also interesting is the fact that only the simplest techniques have been used throughout the display, making it an excellent model

for all who hesitate to dabble in displays because of the supposed technical and artistic difficulties.

* * * *

JOHN WAKEMAN *comments*: Mr. Elliott, who taught me more than I care to remember about classification, seems to have let three characteristics creep into this display—the idea of abusing books, the idea of abusing the staff, the idea of using books. There is room in a single display (as distinct from an exhibition) for only one idea at a time, and this should be expressed *simply*.

Not only too many ideas, but too many things, like a Woolworth's window: too many books—three chewed-up books next to three new ones would make the point more dramatically, and look better; too many show-cards—ten instead of one (the Bulletin is the place for an essay); too many pamphlets, and why not hang them straight? (I asked for a lay opinion of the display and was told it looks like washing on a line).

It's axiomatic that one shouldn't create a demand that can't be satisfied at once, but displaying book jackets with no books inside does precisely that. Bad thing.

The big letters are five by threes (blocked out on ruled paper, five squares high by three wide) and look nice. The smaller ones look even better, but the two styles clash. Generally, fancy lettering is to be avoided, because it takes time and is hard to read. I wish I knew what colours were used.

It seems that in Islington, displays are peddled around the branches. This sounds like a procedure worth copying. How about exchanges between systems?

In summary, all three ideas seem worthwhile, done one at a time, and *simply*.

* * * *

E. F. FERRY *comments*: This exhibition, if not particularly original, has a very real message to convey and does so in a straightforward manner. Within the admitted limits of the size of the showcase, good work has been done—but has there been too much of it? The "chamber of horrors" on the right might well detract from the force of the centre panel, which, probably, deals with the more pressing problem. Staff time spent on endless overdue cards and letters is staff time wasted, and I cannot help feeling that the centre panel, good as it is, would gain in strength from individual treatment. While the basic idea (abuse of books) is the same in each case, it is not too easy to link the two panels in the casual inspection given by most readers. Their attention will undoubtedly be drawn to the more dramatic damaged books. The contrast, too, would be more marked by placing the untouched books immediately next to the wrecks.

The idea, then, sound in concept, might be conveyed more forcibly by separating the two methods of abuse. As far as the physical presentation is concerned, the display is, I suggest, adversely affected by the lettering. Unbalanced, monotonous, it is not worthy of the concept. One would have thought that Islington, with its record of printed publicity, could have managed something better than this. However, this apart, the idea of order in the left hand panel and chaos in the right sums up the fate of the books admirably. As stated at the outset, the message of the display is one which must be conveyed, and graphic demonstration is usually more effective than verbal censure. With the reservations already made, the display may be commended.

THE SCHOOL OF LIBRARIANSHIP AND ARCHIVES

by CATHARINE HALLS, *Manchester P.L.*

THE SCHOOL of Librarianship and Archives at University College, London, is the only school of Librarianship in England to give a postgraduate training in Librarianship. It is however comparatively small (it takes about 40 full-time students, including the 5 or 6 taking the Archive Diploma course), and not perhaps as generally familiar by name, particularly to public librarians, as are other colleges giving instruction in librarianship. As I have just completed one year's study for Part I of the Academic Postgraduate Diploma in Librarianship at the School, I shall describe the course in Librarianship and compare it with the L.A. syllabus for the Registration Examination, to which it corresponds in part.

In the first place the outstanding feature of the School is that the course there *is* one for postgraduate students. This affects not only the standard, but also the method of approach which lays stress upon a wider, more academic background. This is exemplified particularly in the course of lectures on the History and Theory of Librarianship, for which one paper is taken in the examination. There is no parallel for this in the L.A. syllabus, which broadly speaking lays stress more upon practical instruction. It is however a subject of more than academic interest, as it helps librarians of all types to see their work in its proper perspective, to realise the continuity of librarianship through all ages, and to appreciate the enduring value of libraries.

Another course of instruction not included in the L.A. syllabus is that in Palaeography and Diplomatic of English Archives from A.D. 1500. This is intended for both Librarianship and Archives students at the School, and while admittedly of little practical value to many librarians, experience thus gained can on occasions be very useful, as for instance in dealing with documents given to a local collection.

Historical and Critical Bibliography is not, as in the L.A. syllabus, included in the main bibliography paper, but is given a separate paper. This enables the subject to be studied more fully for both English and Continental book production, and also means that the practical application of principles can be studied in some detail. The examination paper usually includes questions on collation and on the transcription of a title page.

The fourth paper in the examination can be taken either on the Palaeography and Diplomatic of English Archives before 1500, or on a further course on historical and critical bibliography. I took the second bibliography paper, and found it extremely interesting and useful, as apart from a more detailed study of ground covered in the first historical bibliography paper, there was a great stress laid upon the application of bibliographic principles.

The L.A. syllabus gives three papers—Bibliography and Documentary Reproduction, Assistance to Readers, and Literature of a Special Subject, which correspond more or less to the two papers in the Diploma Course known as "Bibliography, materials, and research in general and special fields." Book selection, including discussion of translation, editing, readability, and all the subjects found in the corresponding L.A. course (e.g. modern book production in all its aspects, book trade and national bibliography, U.N. and Government publications, etc.) are included. The main difference occurs in the more selective nature of the

Diploma course. Together with the study and criticism of general information sources, each student this year chose two fields of study, one of a scientific nature, one from the humanities, as the basis of a more detailed, specific approach to such material as subject indexes, bibliographies, abstracting services, theses indexes, specialised periodicals, and basic reference works. Study of bibliographical resources in these fields also included the tracing of major libraries specialising in a chosen subject, and schemes for union catalogues and co-operation between such libraries. In this way a fairly detailed knowledge of the bibliography of two major topics is gained, as well as a knowledge of general bibliography acquired from lectures and general practical work.

Cataloguing and Classification, as is to be expected, differ little in the two courses. The chief difference occurs in the Classification course, which in the L.A. syllabus allows a candidate to choose and use in the examination any one of the five main schemes. For the Diploma course, practical work in the examination is based upon Dewey, practice in the other main schemes being acquired in classes throughout the year.

The L.A. Organisation and Administration paper is paralleled in the Diploma course by three alternative papers, dealing with the organisation, functions, and history of National and University Libraries, Special Libraries, and Urban, County, and School Libraries. While only one of these is actually taken in the examination, lectures in one other are attended throughout the course, to give a background for contrast and comparison.

The training also includes three weeks' practical work in a library, usually divided between three different types of library. Other activities at the School include demonstration classes in book binding by Mr. Cockerell, previously held at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, but it is hoped in the future to transfer these to a fully-equipped room at the College. This will be next to the Elizabethan printing press, a working replica housed in the English department of the College, of great value as an adjunct to the historical and bibliography course.

The examination taken at the end of the year, roughly equivalent to the Registration examination, only qualifies for Part I of the Academic Postgraduate Diploma in Librarianship. Part II requires the submission of a thesis on some aspect of Librarianship, or a bibliography, to be completed in the candidate's own time in the following year. Nearly all students choose to compile the bibliography. Part II is therefore valuable in encouraging the application of much that has been learnt in the preceding year. For Part II the student is also required to complete one year's work in an approved library.

The completed Diploma gives exemption from Parts 1, 2 and 4 of the L.A. Finals Examination.

Apart from the value of the course in leading the student so far towards the F.L.A., there are other advantages. Thus the situation alone, in the centre of London, is extremely helpful to the student; apart from being in the immediate neighbourhood of the Chaucer House, University of London and British Museum Libraries, the School is in close contact with many other important London libraries and their librarians.

Equally important is the 35 years' tradition of the School, and its place in the history of librarianship.

The stress laid upon an academic education for librarianship by the School of Librarianship and Archives does not exclude practical considerations. Students are only admitted to the school if they have sufficient experience in an approved library, with the result that they benefit far more than would otherwise be the case from a full-time course.

CORRESPONDENCE

TALKING ABOUT READING.

I was interested in Mr. Horne's reaction [October issue, page 160] to the August Editorial and to my article on Wolfe, not least because it appears to be the *only* reaction. This fact alone gives considerable force to the argument he expounds in paragraph two of his letter.

I agree with Mr. Horne that there are possibilities for "library criticism" and reader-research in the field of fiction. My activities in the promotion of such studies are known. The Editor also made reference to the potentialities in his Southport Conference address. But the encouragement of analysis and criticism on both sides of the counter is not a negation of this fact; rather is it a corollary. Library sponsorship of reading circles, as at Peterborough and Swinton and Pendlebury, has amply rewarded the effort involved. My experience leads me to believe that there is a place for concise summaries of important authors; though whether that place is within the pages of professional journals is, as the Editor remarks, a matter of some contention. I must add, however, that I have enjoyed and appreciated and derived benefit from the two articles which followed mine. In the case of my own contribution, this was a revised version of an introductory article to a bibliography of Thomas Wolfe, which was prepared by my library as one of a series concerned with our special holdings in the North Western Subject Coverage Scheme.

The first part of Mr. Horne's final paragraph is fair comment: I could have and should have mentioned Wolfe's discursive and introvert style, the most obvious example of which is the 70-page long description of a train journey in *Of time and the river*. That I disagree with Mr. Horne in his contention that many pages "are very hard to read," and that I enjoy them

even accepting the fact that they "play no part in the plot" is merely indicative of the individuality of readers and of my own refusal to accept a stereotyped definition of the novel form. Mr. Horne writes that the pages concerned "would put a majority of fiction readers off Thomas Wolfe and make them horribly suspicious of any further recommendations we might make." This is both true and unfair, for no one in his right senses would recommend Wolfe indiscriminately to all fiction readers. As a matter of interest, I have personally introduced his work to some two or three dozen readers only in the past two years. In all but one instance they have come back for more.

G. B. COTTON,

*Borough Librarian, Swinton and
Pendlebury.*

A.A.L. AND NALGO.

I would like to suggest that your correspondents who advocate a separate union for librarians should support NALGO and give up their fanciful ideas. There are far too many talkers in the library profession and far too few men of action for any association of librarians to be effective as a negotiating body. Very few of the higher paid librarians would care to offend their authorities by stirring up campaigns for better pay and conditions, so any attempt at forming such an association would not be viewed favourably in higher quarters. . . .

NALGO is the only hope for better working conditions and pay for librarians. If all public librarians supported its efforts they would greatly help the present and future negotiations.

R. M. LYLE,

Leicestershire Co. L.

LUNCH OUT

(COUNCIL NOTES: SEPTEMBER 15)

GASTRONOMIC ARRANGEMENTS are headlined because of their effect on the conduct of Council business. Our visit to a local hostelry was the result of the summer recess (of Parliamentary proportions) of Chaucer House's canteen facilities. Despite a tardy start to the second "preview" of the film *Resources Discovered*, the three standing committees managed to start their business almost exactly at 10.30 a.m. Some charitable souls attributed it to a shorter-than-usual agenda, others to the unaccustomed lure of mid-day beer, but the fact remains that the Press and Publications Committee had gone in search of the Goat and Compasses within the hour, and both the other committees had finished their business within the tight schedule set for the day.

(Before the progress of Council business is reported, perhaps it should be stressed that there is no deliberate intention of changing the tone of these notes, despite editorial disapproval expressed in a recent issue. If quotations and personalities are less frequent than heretofore, it is because the Honorary Secretary has been forgetful rather than intimidated. My co-reporters on the floor had not been assigned their duties before Council, and platform pressure is such as not to allow extensive note-taking).

The President opened the Council meeting by introducing the newly-appointed Officers, Mr. J. S. Davey (Honorary Education and Sales Officer) and Mr. H. G. Holloway (Honorary Assistant Treasurer).

First of a whole string of matters arising from the minutes was a report that the A.A.L. had been successful in persuading the B.B.C. to arrange a programme on librarianship as a career. Only Mr. Carver, "Father of the House," admitted having listened to it—on Children's Hour.

Further correspondence with the Library Association on the subject of posts at inadequate salaries was received, not altogether favourably, Mr. Tynemouth commenting that the view of the L.A. is apparently that we should have the best possible people for bad posts, and Mr. McColvin (junior) that the L.A.'s attitude indicated an air of cynicism unworthy of a learned profession.

Progress on a number of items which had first been raised at the Birmingham week-end conference was reported. An exhibition of commercial display materials is to be arranged early next year by a joint committee of the London and Home Counties Branch and the Greater London Division. The exhibition of publicity material held at the conference was repeated at Battersea Public Library in June, and the Council expressed its thanks to Mr. G. Harris and Mr. T. Faulkner for their work on the exhibition.

Under "correspondence" the most important item was concerned with the grading of public library staff, on which subject a letter and circular had been received from the Library Association. Following a lively discussion, two motions by Mr. Tynemouth, seconded by Mr. W. G. Smith, were passed for forwarding to the L.A., one concerning the L.A. Council's attitude towards trade union activities by members, the other pressing for more immediate action on a recommendation that all assistants in the General Divisions should receive two additional increments to compensate for awkward hours.

The President reported correspondence with the Booksellers' and Publishers' Associations concerning the production of subject posters suitable for bookshops and libraries, the possibilities of which are still being investigated. A letter from Mr. Lockwood revealed that the Brighton School of Librarianship students had enjoyed their experience as observers at the May Council meeting, and the experiment is to be continued.

Council passed to the pleasurable duty of appointing or nominating officers for 1956. The greatest pleasure must be felt by all at the prospect of seeing

Mr. Tynemouth back on the Council platform next year in the highest office of the Association as President. Nothing less would have been fitting as a reward for his valuable work for the A.A.L. The Vice-Presidency passes to another great servant of the Association, Miss E. J. Willson. For the elective offices, the Council nominated Mr. E. E. Moon as Honorary Secretary; Mr. H. G. Holloway as Honorary Treasurer; and, after consideration of three nominations from Divisions, Mr. W. G. Smith as Honorary Editor. Mr. P. G. New is to be co-opted to the Council with a view to his appointment next year as Honorary Publications Officer.

When the report of the Press and Publications Committee was received, Council took the opportunity to record its great debt to Mr. T. Mann for his work as Publications Officer. The Education Committee reported that the Birmingham and District Branch were unhappy about the frequent changes in the L.A. syllabus. In view of the efforts of the A.A.L. to get the syllabus changed at times, the Council felt unable to support the Birmingham Branch. Two students had complained of conditions akin to those of Dotheboys' Hall at the Bristol examination centre—this is to be investigated.

The Conference Committee reported that arrangements were in hand for next year's week-end conference to be held at Girton College, Cambridge, from 13-15 April. The theme is to be co-operation, a subject which has possibly been discussed before within those walls.

Finance and General Purposes Committee spent more time in discussing the film *Resources Discovered* than anything else. Some criticisms had been received, and even after the remaking of the sound-track for the opening of the film, a number of members of the Council were not happy about the finished result. A search is to be made for a golden voice before further changes are made to the sound-track, and this film is now not likely to be available before January.

Following the committee reports, Council devoted its attention once more to capitulation, on which subject the Officers are to present a memorandum at the next meeting. The revision of Council's Standing Orders has now been completed, after several years' work by the Rules Sub-Committee and some last-minute efforts to effect final changes by the surprising alliance of the Yorkshire Division and Mr. W. G. Smith.

The Birmingham week-end conference was again on the agenda, and afforded an opportunity for thanks to be recorded for the work done by Miss Higgs as Conference Secretary and Mr. Parrish, the Hon. Treasurer of the Midland Division. Two motions had been deferred from the previous meeting, and arising out of these it was agreed to ask the L.A. once more to consider appointing a professional Public Relations Officer, and to ask the Press and Publications Committee to design a model introduction to the library service for readers, which would serve as a guide to individual librarians considering such a publication for their own authority.

A rapidly emptying Council Chamber caused the deferment of two items on the agenda, so that some consideration could be given to the motion appearing in the L.A. Council's name on the agenda for the A.G.M. at Southport. The Honorary Secretary was instructed to speak at Southport, indicating the support of the A.A.L. Council for the proposals of the Library Association.

Some of the few who remained at the end of the meeting heard the reports of the Council's representatives on the L.A. Council and committees, and expressed concern at the number of occasions this year on which it had been impossible to finish the business set out on the agenda papers. All Council members are to be asked to seek the permission of husbands, wives and Chiefs for a day and night session, if necessary, in November, so that Council may finish its business for the year. At 6.18 the few departed.

ERIC MOON.

GIRTON DAYS !

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL A.A.L. WEEK-END CONFERENCE will be held at Girton College, Cambridge, on 13th-15th April, 1956. The theme will be CO-OPERATION. Full details will be announced later. Meanwhile, make a note of the date.

13 - 15 APRIL

BOOKS AND BOOKMEN.

We welcome the first (October) issue of *Books and Bookmen*, an attractive new monthly magazine from the publishers of *Films and Filming*, *Dance and Dancers*, *Plays and Players* and *Music and Musicians*. We shall of course reserve judgment for twelve months, but it does seem that if this is a fair sample of what is to come it will console those of us who mourn the passing of *John O'London's Weekly*, and give us once again a less formidable survey of current literature than that provided by the *Times Literary Supplement*.

This first issue contains news and reviews, previews and interviews; it is profusely illustrated with portraits of authors, reproductions of book-jackets and some well chosen pictures

from new books. Of particular interest are three pages devoted to new publishing abroad, and odd corners are filled with such bright little items as a list of Books being Serialized (of especial interest to librarians), August best-sellers at two leading bookshops, and a rather unkind assemblage of reviewers' comments on John Wain's *Living in the present*.

No doubt your public library will subscribe to this periodical, but consider also whether you can afford not to take it for yourself. For the assistant in a public library it could usefully supplement the Sunday newspapers as a digestible guide to the welter of new books. The assistant in a special library might well find it a useful means of keeping in touch with the rest of civilization.

REFERRED TO YOU

THE A.G.M. OF THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

reported by W. G. SMITH

REPORTING on last year's A.G.M., I referred to "annual gentle murmurings." There was, however, nothing gentle about this year's meeting, and Southport saw a bitter verbal battle lasting over two hours. The cause of contention was the L.A. Council's motion which is set out in the *Record* for August and which proposes that the library powers of all local authorities where the rateable value is less

than £300,000 should be surrendered to their county councils, or arrangements made for joint services with neighbouring authorities. Mr. McColvin, in proposing the motion, said that the small authorities were not capable financially of providing an adequate service of books and qualified staff. He revealed that the Association of Municipal Corporations (A.M.C.) had issued a circular advising its members to vote against the proposals. The A.M.C. apparently rejected the right of any organisation but itself to hold views on the reform of local government, and

THE THURLOE SERIES

*of special library
editions——ideal*

for travelling

libraries

Arts and Crafts
Cycling Tourist Guides
Electrical
Engineering
Gardening
Pets and Livestock
Modelling, etc.
Modelling, Railways
Photography
Wireless and
Television
Juveniles and
Elementary Readers

*Catalogues and Samples on
request*

OPPENHEIM & Co. Ltd.

*Library and Wholesale
Booksellers*

25, THURLOE STREET,
SOUTH KENSINGTON,
LONDON, S.W.7.

Telephone :
Kensington 6807 & 9431

THE HOLT-JACKSON BOOK COMPANY LIMITED



*Public and County
Library Booksellers*



MONTAUBAN
CHAMBERS,
ST. ANNES-ON-SEA,
LANCS.

Telephone: St. Annes 575



London Showroom:
59, BRITTON STREET,
CLERKENWELL ROAD, E.C.1
Telephone: Clerkenwell 3250.

even went so far as to suggest that we ought to be denied the right to express opinions on the subject at our own A.G.M.

The A.M.C. viewpoint was presented by a parade of small-town councillors whose objections may be summarised as follows:—

1. The L.A. Council's views are idealistic. (*N.B.*: This is a term of abuse).
2. The proposals would result in remote control by inefficient county authorities.
3. Consultation had not been held with local authorities before preparing the proposals.
4. Local pride insists that power remains with the local councils.

Supporting the Council, Mr. Clem Harrison, of Manchester Library School, warned us against the emotional appeal for the retention of powers by small authorities. He insisted that the point at issue was whether we are to have rational service units as found necessary in other spheres of local government. Mr. Moon expressed the support of the A.A.L. Council and congratulated the L.A. Council in bringing forward these sensible proposals. A courageous supporter was Mr. J. F. W. Bryon, himself a librarian of the small town of Eccles. He admitted that his ser-

vice could never be first-class unless it was merged into a larger unit, and to refuse this was to turn our backs on our duty to the public. One authority member, Councillor Finsberg, of Hampstead, also spoke in favour of the motion, condemning the Little Englander attitude of other Councillors, and belittling the A.M.C. as an inefficient, procrastinating organisation. To the complaint of insufficient consultation with local authorities, Mr. McColvin replied that the Council was seeking the support of its members before approaching outside bodies.

A disturbing feature of the meeting was that many Chief Librarians appeared to be under the impression that they were there as delegates of their Councils rather than as personal members of the Association. In fact they are delegates only to the Conference which is something quite distinct from the A.G.M. which they attend in a purely personal capacity.

After a number of amendments had been rejected, the motion was defeated by 539 votes to 311. A postal vote was, however, successfully demanded, and a referendum of the whole membership will have been held by the time this appears in print. In view of the unrepresentative nature of the A.G.M., this is a very desirable proceeding, and it is to be hoped that all assistants will have taken the opportunity to use their votes.

ASSISTANT IN THE COMMUNITY

THE A.A.L. SESSION AT SOUTHPORT

reported by W. G. SMITH

"MY SUBJECT is the improvement of the public library service by the elimination of some of the crosses which assistants have to bear." The speaker was Mr. Arthur Jones, the Editor of this journal, at the A.A.L. session of the L.A. Conference at Southport. Among the crosses he included the burden of clerical routines on profes-

sional staff, the unreality of our examination system, lack of in-service training, and inefficient staff management. Such topics would draw the interest of any assistant, but Mr. Jones claimed to be aiming his guns mainly at chief librarians and authority representatives (people "usually known to assistants only as among the more voracious readers of light fiction").

Some of the L.A. Examinations received our Editor's biggest broadside, with the assertion that they give a

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR BINDING

FICTION

In Full Rexine with new reinforced unsewn binding our "Standard Fiction Binding" is the most economic in the country.

JUVENILE "FLATS"

We can solve the problems of this class of work with an almost unbreakable binding that has been proved in Libraries, and that we have evolved for all flat ephemeral work at a reasonable price.

NON FICTION AND MUSIC

A rexine spine with waterproof cloth plus a new and greatly improved joint will give hard and long wear to all volumes at a very moderate range of prices.

We will be very happy to rebind any volumes published in any unsewn binding other than spiral bindings.

We must emphasise that we guarantee all work undertaken by us in any process against fair wear and tear and Library usage

ALL ENQUIRIES WELCOME AT BENLOCK LIMITED

SOUTH BANK · MIDDLESBROUGH · YORKS.

Berkshire Bookbinding Co., Ltd.

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS

NON - FICTION AND
REFERENCE BINDINGS
ARE OUR SPECIALITY

27, ELDON TERRACE
READING, BERKS.

Telephone: Reading 60688.

CHIEFTAIN

GOATSKIN

HIGH QUALITY
LEATHER
with an
EVEN NATURAL
GRAIN

ACID
RESISTING
Guaranteed
to withstand
the
P.I.R.A. TEST

HARD
WEARING
Supplied in
15 STANDARD
SHADES

SELECTIONS
FOR ALL
STYLES OF
BOOKBINDING

J. HEWIT & SONS LTD.

Tanners and Leather Dressers
125 HIGH STREET, EDINBURGH 1
50 ST. JOHN STREET, LONDON. E.C.1

false picture of librarianship and are mere academic obstacles to professional advancement. He pointed to the contrast between the reality of our harassed book-stampers and shelvees and the ideal conception of our job, as reflected in the examinations. Our high-flown examination syllabus lures people into the profession under false pretences since they find in practice that only a small part of their time is used to serve the community *as a librarian*. The Final Examination, in particular, contains much dead wood; Part 1 needs splitting into alternative parts for different types of librarians, Part 4 already has a number of alternatives ranging from palaeography to the literature of Wales, yet none is of major importance, for example, to a senior lending librarian. As a result, students, if they are wise, treat this section with the contempt it deserves by cramming the alternative which will be easiest to them and then forgetting all about it once the examination is passed. Staff management and service to industry would be two more useful alternatives to this section.

The twin arts of librarianship, in Mr. Jones's view are book selection and assistance to readers (cataloguing and classification being dismissed as a minor science). In our library schools and in our examinations, assistance to readers seems to be interpreted as the technique of reference work, and it was good to hear Mr. Jones taking the broader view of it as the exploitation of the whole of our book stocks. It is inevitable, he argued, that the best entrants to the profession will soon have the sense and initiative to get out again when they discover that they are not allowed to concentrate on these arts, but spend most of their time on

routine processes calling for no higher skill than is demanded from a minor clerk. The division of staff into clerical and professional classes is the only way of providing an exacting, skilled, worthwhile job for a professionally trained man or woman. Mr. Jones suggested that division could be achieved even in small service units, and this view was confirmed by the experiences of a number of librarians recently returned from Canada and the United States whom we heard at another conference session. He thought that, in order to facilitate the division, we might re-examine the traditional relationship between lending and reference services.

Another of the speaker's pleas was for a greater sense of responsibility towards the less demanding of our readers. He joined forces with Messrs. Sharr and J. W. Carter in calling for investigation of the effect of light literature on the culturally immature and maintained that only by regarding it as an important social service could we continue, with self-respect, to provide this type of literature.

A sense of disillusionment undoubtedly exists among many assistants, and Mr. Jones showed how this may be overcome to enable the assistant to take his place confidently in the community he serves. Few assistants were present at Southport, and one A.A.L. Division has already invited Mr. Jones to repeat his talk at one of its meetings. Others might well consider doing the same. They will be assured of a stimulating occasion. The paper will of course be published in full in the L.A. Conference proceedings.

ROUND THE DIVISIONS—15

WESSEX

GUY FAWKES DAY, 1924, saw the first meeting of the Western Section of the South Coast Division held at Portsmouth. In those days the Section

covered the coastal belt from Brighton to Poole, and considerable difficulty was experienced in travelling to meetings. In 1927 a separate Division was

forned under the title of the South Western Division with a frontier on the Hampshire/Sussex border. In 1939 the title was changed to Wessex, and the area covered included the whole of Dorset, Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight, with an outpost at Salisbury. In 1949 Salisbury seceded to Bristol and District, and since that date we have suffered no further loss.

Including the A.G.M., six meetings are held each year in different parts of the Division. These meetings normally follow the pattern of an afternoon visit to some place of interest with the business meeting being held after tea. Places visited in recent years include newspaper offices, printing works, cathedrals and the brewery of Messrs. Strong and Co. of Romsey. Speakers have included authors, booksellers, library assistants and eminent members of the Library profession. Brains Trusts, Symposiums, Open Forums and New Year Parties have all had a turn

at providing the evening's entertainment.

Whenever possible we try to include a conducted tour of the library concerned in the programme of each meeting. We are fortunate in having most types of library represented in the Division. The Library of Southampton University has on several occasions played host to the Division, and we were recently entertained at the Royal Aircraft Establishment Library at Farnborough.

Joint meetings have been held from time to time with the Sussex Division and the Bristol and District Division; also with the S.W. Branch of the L.A. Our relations with the Branch are good.

Membership fluctuates around the 180 to 200 mark, the majority coming from libraries in Hampshire, Dorset being a rural county with few large towns. The considerable expansion of the Hampshire County Library System since the war has provided the Division with both new members and fresh places in which to hold meetings.

Annual revision courses are held for the Entrance examination. A few years ago a most successful week-end revision course for Registration was held at Southampton, but this venture has not so far been repeated. The Division has compiled and published a guide to the library resources in the area. The *Wessex Bookman*, a magazine started with the avowed aim of arousing and maintaining interest in Divisional activities, still continues to appear at irregular intervals.

It is not proposed here to name prominent members of the A.A.L. who have come out of Wessex or have dwelt with us for a few passing years, but we can claim our share of national officers both in the past and in the present. It may however be appropriate to record in view of recent attacks on ageing National Councillors that A. Llewellyn Carver, Esq., F.L.A., and Honorary Fellow of the A.A.L., continues to give of his best both to the Division and to the A.A.L. at large, and long may he continue so to do.

HOUSEHOLD WORDS

"We need a loose-leaf encyclopaedia of library method, a library Keesing's rather than a library Mrs. Beeton."

wrote Mr. T. E. Callander, F.L.A. (then Borough Librarian of Lambeth) in the January 1950 issue of this journal—thus paying a veiled (and welcome) compliment to KEESING'S recording and indexing methods, now in the 25th year of continuous publication.

CRAMERS for MUSIC

MUSICAL LITERATURE
AND MUSIC BINDING

139, New Bond Street
London, W.1

★ Special Music Enquiry Bureau

THE ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN

Official Journal of the Association of Assistant Librarians

(Section of the Library Association)

Edited by A. C. Jones, Hornsey Public Libraries.

VOL. 48. No. 12

DECEMBER, 1955

EDITORIAL.

WITH THIS ISSUE the present Honorary Editor lays down his blue pencil, his scissors and his paste-pot. He has been privileged to conduct this journal for the last five years, during which it has been given a new name, and has once more achieved monthly publication. The support of members for their journal, as contributors, correspondents and constructive critics, has never been greater and has considerably lightened the editor's duties. In welcoming Mr. W. G. Smith to the office, may we record our appreciation of this support, and express the hope that he may continue to enjoy it in equal measure.

INDEX, 1955

The Index for the 1955 volume is distributed with this issue to subscribers only. Other readers may obtain a copy by sending a 1½d. stamped addressed envelope to The Hon. Education and Sales Officer, 49, Halstead Gardens, Winchmore Hill, London, N.21.

IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS . . .

The following new AAL publications are now ready:—

AAL Guides to the L.A. Examinations (edited by Dr. A. J. Walford).

Final Examination, Part 3a (iv) and (v). English Literature, 1780-1900, and 1900 onwards. 4s. 6d. (3s. 6d. to members).

Final Examination, Part 4c. Advanced Classification and Cataloguing. 4s. 6d. (3s. 6d. to members).

Sayers, W. C. B. **First Steps in annotation in catalogues.** New edition, 2s. 6d. (2s. to members).

* * * *

The **AAL Guide to the First Professional Examination** is still in preparation. Publication is not now expected before March.

AAL Publications are obtainable from the Hon. Education and Sales Officer (Mr. J. S. Davey, F.L.A.) 49, Halstead Gardens, London, N.21).

LOGICAL CLASSIFICATION or A LIFE OF BLISS

by FAY CHIVERS.

HE DID LOOK rather an odd little fellow; I thought so when he came in. He wandered round the shelves with a disgruntled air, poking at one or two volumes with his umbrella. Then seeing me leave the counter for a moment, he came over, nudged me, waved his hand around to indicate the bookstacks, and prepared to speak.

"I don't understand this business of classification," he said plaintively.

"Oh—it's quite simple—arts and sciences on the left—fiction in the middle—history and peoples' lives over there."

"No, no," he interrupted, "I don't mean *that*. This classification—I've been reading it up. Where's the tree?"

It was about then that the interview began to assume the proportions of a nightmare.

"Tree? . . . we've got branches . . ."

"No. Poor Harry's tree. Never mind. What are your characteristics?"

I began to edge away.

"Listen," he said. He had the 'long grey beard and glittering eye' approach. I listened. "These people—Back Stairs, Filberts and so on—I've studied them. You've got it all wrong here. You should start with substance. It's a fundamental. I've got notes." He adjusted his glasses and began to read. "Now we have one class a term, under the ideal principal. That's right, isn't it?"

I hadn't been to library school then. I agreed.

"If you don't use one characteristic as the basis of division at each stage, you get cross."

"Oh, I do," I assented sympathetically. "It nearly drives me . . ."

"Quite. Then we have someone with the subalterns generally—an infirm species."

I hadn't done national service, either. I disagreed.

"I think it might be clearer," he continued, "if we took a practical example and classified it according to a logical basis. Didn't someone try it out with a librarian, or rag-and-bone man, or suchlike? Let's attempt it. A librarian is a genius, is he not?"

I hardly liked to contradict.

"Now, we'll divide the type—as Johnson might have done—into librarians and damned librarians." I murmured that the principle was wrong. He ignored me. "They're both specious, aren't they?" He thumbed the pages of a dirty small yellow cramming book, excitedly. "If that's right, all librarians are 'mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive.'"

I nodded. He fixed me with his eye. "I hope you're following," he said. "It's all a mental process. Abstraction just won't do, you know. I don't think you've been listening. Show me the extension."

I was not sure of his intention, so I did not answer.

"Well, what are the peculiar properties of the librarian? Is it denotation?"

"There's nothing wrong with his notation," I snapped. "Now look—we're closing soon—I should go home and think about it there, old chap."

"Oh, they don't know I got away yet," he assured me. "I *had* to come into a library to get to the root of this logical tree classification that I understood you used. They're always telling me," he tittered, "how unpredictable my behaviour is."

"What makes you so interested in logical classification?" I enquired, to make light conversation while I gradually sidled nearer to the telephone.

"It was in hospital it began," he said sadly. "An operation. Dichotomy. Very painful. I was on a library course and had my textbooks with me; but I was doing very well till I got to the fifth predicate."

"What happened then?"

"An accident."

He bowed, replaced his hat, and shambled off. He made a pathetic figure as he moved away through all the carefree people jostling in the queue, out into the great illogical world. And as he disappeared, I still gazed after him, dewey eyed.

NOR DO WE !

PRE-CHRISTMAS SALE of French and exclusive model Hats. All one price, 63/-; also model library Hats, many never worn. One price, 21/-.—Advertisement, *Daily Telegraph*.

The man in the Moon came down too soon . .

And our announcement last month of the Seventh Annual Week-end Conference was also a little premature. It has been necessary to change the venue from Girton College, Cambridge, to Keswick Training College, Norwich. The theme (*Co-operation*) and the dates (13th—15th April) remain the same. Further details will be announced later. Be sure that you have a note of the dates, and remember—

for Cambridge read

NORWICH

A PEEP BEHIND THE SCENES

By B. R. INGRAM, *Assistant, Devon Co.L.*

WE STARTED OFF in Mr. Nelson's new car laden with a couple of typewriters, book boxes and a paraffin heater. I have since ridden in this car with three other fellows, and found it luxurious compared to fighting for my honour with an over-affectionate oil heater. The thing would *not* leave me alone: holding it at arm's length only encouraged it—a deft wriggle and I would see it ogling me from the floor of the car, having soundly barked my shins on the way down!

At last I mastered this menace and set about reading my T.L.S., which I had dutifully brought with me so that the travelling time might not be wasted by idle views of the countryside glimpsed through the car window . . . goodness knows I tried hard, but after reading the same sentence for at least half a dozen times, I decided that my eyesight was far more valuable than the news that Western Australia wanted an assistant to take charge of the circulation of books to the Outback.

We arrived at our destination in a rain storm, and it was a storm that had obviously been unused to any opposition during its journey across the Atlantic. It roared defiance at the houses and shrieked insanely through the trees, tearing the innocent spring leaves from their nursery boughs, filling the drains with them to convert the streets into treacherous waterslides.

"Better get the stove going," came the muffled voice of Mr. Nelson from the depths of a cupboard full of damp fiction. Now I am not one to bear malice, and I turned to unpack the paraffin heater with no bad

feeling toward it, but the thing obviously bore me a grudge so that I nearly severed an artery cutting the string of the packing case. My reason was saved that day by the nail file I always carry with me for such emergencies, because it enabled me to hack through the wire that kept this beast in check. Assembled at last! . . . victory? Not on your life! It had to be filled: the gallon can of paraffin opened. Again with the help of my trusty blade I prised off the lid—the marks of that particular struggle are now quite healed—and I then set about filling the ravenous monster.

I am quite aware that there is a right and a wrong way to pour liquid from a square can with the cap at one end; and I've seen it done perfectly many times: there are really only two alternatives. But on such occasions I will lay one to a thousand that I choose the incorrect method. Had there been any takers that day I should now be a rich man.

The oil was obviously in alliance with my old adversary, the heater, added to which it seemed to have a great longing for the wide open spaces: it didn't trickle out of the can in the normal, civilised manner, but leapt out in great gouts all over the stove, the floor and my second-best shoes—thank goodness I took Mother's advice. I managed to overcome this deluge and poured what remained into the leering mouth of the triumphant stove.

By this time I was thoroughly shaken, and from the strong smell that pervaded my person, might have been an assistant in a hardware store rather than a librarian. The branch library was situated in an old Methodist School, which it shared with a welfare clinic and an old people's club, so to find my way to the wash-room I encountered several expectant grandmothers and dejected mothers before I reached a dingy little lean-to at the rear. I turned on the tap and hopefully held my reeking hands beneath. The thing gurgled and belched as if awakened from a long sleep, and just as I had given up all hope of water, vomited a stream of dirty, yellow liquid, soaking me to the elbows. Of course, there was no towel and by the time I had fished a handkerchief from my pocket my hands were practically dry.

Mr. Nelson was very kind and understanding, even offering me a cigarette to steady my shattered nerves, realising that until recently, I had led a sheltered life in non-county libraries where there are porters and such-like to fetch and carry for pampered assistants. He made sympathetic noises when I displayed my various gashes and damp spots, but made it clear that such things were part of the everyday life of an assistant in a county library. He also drew my attention to the blocked gutters, muttering about depreciation of the bookstock, but I refused to be drawn out, having done quite enough for one day.

Ask any Librarian the world over,
whose Library is fully up-to-date
on Current Affairs, how to keep
track of developments in Politics,
Economics, Social Questions on a
truly global scale, and he will
tell you:

THE ANSWER IS KEESING'S

CRAMERS *for MUSIC*

MUSICAL LITERATURE
AND MUSIC BINDING

139, New Bond Street
London, W.1

★ Special Music Enquiry Bureau

BOYS IN GREEN

by ALAN GLENCROSS

THE NEW NOVEL by Mr. Kingsley Amis, *That uncertain feeling*, is the story of John Lewis, an assistant librarian in a Welsh public library, who is simultaneously involved in an *affaire* with the wife of a member of the Libraries Committee, an application for the vacant post of Deputy Librarian, and his mistress's attempts to secure the appointment for him. Parts of the book—the visit to a dance hall, the verse drama by an English-speaking Welsh poet, and the hero's escape in improbable disguise from his mistress's house, for instance—are very funny in the way that most of *Lucky Jim* was funny, but the strongest impression it makes is one of the author's contempt for all his characters and for most aspects of their various ways of life. Since that contempt so obviously embraces Lewis's profession, it is a pity it is not based on a greater familiarity with the subject.

The story is set in Aberdarcy, a seaport in South Wales which boasts a University College. Its public library is "large," and also seems to be dismal, dirty, badly stocked, ill-equipped, under-staffed and inefficiently administered. The members of the staff introduced into the story are Lewis himself, a graduate and an A.L.A., who has been "three years in this job"; Ieuan Jenkins, who "catalogued the non-fiction" and "sees to the inter-library exchange system"; "young Dilys Jones, a blonde girl of sixteen or seventeen"; and "Webster, the Sub-Librarian," who is "going to Leicester in a few months" as Chief Librarian. The Chief, referred to throughout as "old Rowlands," does not appear, even at the Committee meeting at which his new Deputy is to be appointed.

The inadequacies of the staff, stock, catalogues, accommodation, caretaking and administration are all revealed in the first chapter, which describes Lewis's first meeting with Elizabeth Gruffydd-Williams. Mrs. Williams has come to the Reference Library with a clear and unequivocal request for a book containing illustrations of Welsh medieval costume. She tries it first on "young Dilys Jones," whom it sends rushing to Lewis with a complaint that "She've been terribly rude . . . Kept on asking me about a book on some old-fashioned thing. Something about costume or something." Lewis, principally because he has nothing better to do, condescends to deal with the enquiry himself and goes up to the Reference Library, "slapping my heels on the dark-brown hummocky lino." He identifies Mrs. Williams and asks if he can help her, trying "successfully, I think, to suggest how very unlikely, all things considered, this was." She counters this gambit with "My husband's on the Council . . . He's on the Libraries Committee," and repeats her enquiry.

Lewis's next moves are: "Wouldn't the University College Library be a more likely place to enquire?" and "Had you thought of trying the subject-catalogues here?"

He is persuaded, under protest ("I warn you I'm not much of a catalogue expert either") to look himself. The catalogue is a printed one (or why the reference to page numbers?), in reformed spelling ("*Kostyqom*, *Dres* or *Kloadhing*") and identifies the books by their "shelf-marks." It shows nothing except a history of underclothing.

The next move is to take Mrs. Williams to see Mr. Jenkins ("We can find out from him if we can get hold of something you might want from somewhere else"). They go along a "gloomy corridor" past "a room ostensibly dedicated to book repairs, but nobody used to do very much of that in my time, and the place was actually three parts full of

junk" and into the room "where Jenkins catalogued the non-fiction. Nobody had been cataloguing the fiction since the outbreak of war, and after the war nothing had happened to make starting again seem desirable. Here too there was plenty of junk, much of it powdered with dust and plaster." Until Jenkins arrives they talk, she leaning on a table and he on a "rusty cabinet." She has then to write down her "query about a possible exchange" for Jenkins's benefit.

Elizabeth Gruffydd-Williams eventually gets her book—from Wands-worth. Apparently no library in Wales has any books on Welsh costume.

The next eleven chapters deal with Lewis's amatory misadventures and their consequences, but there are occasional references to the impending "election" of the new Sub-Librarian and to Elizabeth's lobbying on Lewis's behalf and Jenkins's on his own. Chapters 13 and 14 deal with the interview and are more comical than the author can have intended. Perhaps the fact that each candidate had to submit twenty copies of his application may have had something to do with it, but there seems to have been little competition for the post.

The Committee seems to be composed mainly of co-opted members, including one who is there "as representative of the Secretary of the Trades and Labour Council." The "regular Chairman" is absent, and the chair is taken by Gruffydd-Williams, who seems to be the *eminence grise* of the Committee. Even so, he has to be "prompted occasionally by the clerk." The questions asked by the members of the Committee are probably little more fatuous than those often asked on similar occasions in real life, but two of Lewis's replies, with their attendant soliloquies, deserve quoting. Asked whether he thinks ability in "seeking out obscure and little-known books" to be "an important qualification for the post," he answers, "... Anyone with any self-respect would of course regard catering for the expert as an integral part of his duties," thinking, "Yes, that's right . . . showing the expert where to find the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* or the *Cambridge History of English Literature*." He says that his special field of study is the drama, "thinking of the time I'd helped a man from Brynbwrla Community Centre to confirm the absence from catalogue and shelves of *The Duchess of Malfi*."

The assiduous reader can discover further information about Aberdarcy Public Library and about Lewis's standards of professional competence and ethics. He will learn, for instance, that all the users of the library are shabby, and that the library possesses only two typewriters, both of which are over forty years old. He will profit from the demonstrations of how to be rude to readers and how to deal with postal enquiries ("I crumpled all this up and threw it down the main steps into the street") and will appreciate the ease with which the Great Light Fiction Problem has been solved once and for all.

"On these shelves we kept about two hundred books of the kind technically known as romances. Most of them were ordinary 'light' romances, but a couple of dozen at one end made various untenable claims to literary merit. This two hundred, the composition of which changed only when re-binding necessitated the withdrawal of the old volume and the calling-up of a reserve from the open shelves, used to supply the entire literary needs of half-a-dozen times the number of housewives, office girls, shop girls and school girls. I sometimes wondered how this could be . . ."

That uncertain feeling has been widely reviewed, and for the most part well reviewed. One critic used the word "astringent" in writing of it. I should prefer to describe it as "emetic."

CORRESPONDENCE

DISPLAY DISCUSSION

First—a word of welcome to the interest being shown in displays, a subject often much neglected but worthy of the attention of us all.

Second—may I cross swords with Mr. Wakeman? In the November issue of the *Assistant Librarian* he says, “It’s axiomatic that one shouldn’t create a demand that can’t be satisfied at once. . . .” Is it? If so, why condemn book jacket displays only, when the periodical *Library Bulletin*, with its list of recent additions, has the same effect?

I have met this opinion regarding book jackets before, and I disagree. What does this form of publicity attempt to achieve? Besides telling our readers of our new additions, I submit that there is a more valuable aspect—making it known that certain books, or books on certain subjects, do exist. In my experience, this object is often achieved, to the surprise and pleasure of many a reader.

Admittedly such an objective should possibly be aimed at “the lost 75 per cent” more than at the converted; admittedly, too, there may be slight disappointment to the reader when a book, so advertised, is “on loan at present.”

I repeat, the criticism can be aimed at the bulletin as well as at the jacket display. But I do not admit its validity. Backed by an efficient reservation system it is no “bad thing,” Mr. Wakeman, when weighed against the advantage of putting the diversity of books over to our readers.

J. R. HOWES,

Branch Librarian, Paddington P.L.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Mr. Hope has touched on a matter that concerns us all, that of public relations. There is a tendency amongst librarians to bemoan the fact that no one appears to appreciate our true worth, but we deserve it, you

know. Even NALGO, for all the mud that we sling at it, has its public relations officers at national, district and branch level, so that NALGO activities are reported in the most unlikely places. When, however, a letter or report on the alleged deficiencies of libraries or librarians is published in the local Press, we are lucky if we are defended at all.

What I am suggesting is systematic coverage of the Press and every such letter or report answered not in three weeks’ time when everyone has forgotten what it was all about, but by return of post. It is not enough to leave it to a few individuals (no names, no pack drill), who are prepared to stick out their necks to support the movement they believe in. We happen to believe in libraries, but we live in a hard world and we shall have to fight for them on an organised basis or their claims will be overlooked.

M. T. SLEIGHTHOLM,

Senior Assistant, Leeds P.L.

[As a result of recommendations at the Birmingham Conference, this Association is pressing the L.A. to appoint a Public Relations Officer.—Hon. Ed.]

L.A. MOTION

May I comment on a number of statements which appeared in the *Assistant Librarian* in November?

In referring to the motion put forward by the Council at Southport, the editorial stated that it is the duty of the A.A.L. “to see that the arguments are fairly placed before him. On this occasion we are confident that this was done.” I am not aware of what was done in other divisions but in the North-West, apart from a circular letter issued by Liverpool to its own staff, no meeting was arranged and no letter was circulated which gave the opposition point of view. Under the byelaws the ballot papers

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR BINDING

FICTION

In Full Rexine with new reinforced unsewn binding our "Standard Fiction Binding" is the most economic in the country.

JUVENILE "FLATS"

We can solve the problems of this class of work with an almost unbreakable binding that has been proved in Libraries, and that we have evolved for all flat ephemeral work at a reasonable price.

NON FICTION AND MUSIC

A rexine spine with waterproof cloth plus a new and greatly improved joint will give hard and long wear to all volumes at a very moderate range of prices.

We will be very happy to rebind any volumes published in any unsewn binding other than spiral bindings.

We must emphasise that we guarantee all work undertaken by us in any process against fair wear and tear and Library usage

ALL ENQUIRIES WELCOME AT BENLOCK LIMITED

SOUTH BANK · MIDDLESBROUGH · YORKS.

Berkshire Bookbinding Co., Ltd.

LIBRARY BOOKBINDERS

NON - FICTION AND
REFERENCE BINDINGS
ARE OUR SPECIALITY

27, ELDON TERRACE
READING, BERKS.

Telephone: Reading 60688.

CHIEFTAIN

GOATSKIN

HIGH QUALITY
LEATHER
with an
EVEN NATURAL
GRAIN

ACID
RESISTING
Guaranteed
to withstand
the
P.I.R.A. TEST

HARD
WEARING
Supplied in
15 STANDARD
SHADES

SELECTIONS
FOR ALL
STYLES OF
BOOKBINDING

J. HEWIT & SONS LTD.

Tanners and Leather Dressers
125 HIGH STREET, EDINBURGH 1
50 ST. JOHN STREET, LONDON. E.C.1

contained only the motion as it stood on the agenda and Mr. McColvin's remarks in the L.A.R. hardly qualify as being representative of the opposition.

In the report of the A.A.L. Council meeting the Honorary Secretary stated that the motion was given "some consideration" by a "rapidly emptying Council Chamber." Surely this was not sufficient for a motion of this importance.

Again, the editorial stated that the voting of some chief librarians was "attributed in part to self interest (however subconscious)." It would not be unfair to apply the same argument to some librarians who voted in favour of the motion.

The editorial is misleading in stating that "the split . . . was less keen . . . due to the fortuitous circumstance that the last two speakers . . . were a chief librarian and an authority member, both of whom spoke strongly in support of the motion." It is doubtful if anything said at the A.G.M. altered any opinions, as most delegates had already made up their minds as to how they would vote. There must be no hiding the fact that the split is very wide.

The report of the A.G.M. lists the arguments put forward by the members who opposed the motion. (1) "The L.A. Council's views are idealistic." This was not, as the correspondent infers, "a term of abuse," but a genuine belief by some members, that the motion was not realistic at the present time when the tendency in other spheres, would appear to be toward decentralisation and stringent economies by Government Departments.

It was admitted that consultation had not been held with local authorities but what makes this even greater condemnation was the failure to explain why this motion was placed on the agenda at such a late stage, without prior warning, when it was admitted that it had been under discussion by the Council since May, 1953.

Local pride, may I remind your

correspondent, is not necessarily a bad thing. It is something which should be encouraged, not discouraged.

Is it fair to suggest that Mr. Harrison's speech was without a little of the quality which he condemned? I recall his exhortation to "go and look at Blackpool tower," as a reminder of the defeat of similar proposals some years ago.

Whatever the outcome of the acceptance of this motion, it is certain that the L.A. has hindered the work of the librarians of smaller authorities, who may have to contend with existing conditions for some while yet. It has done a tremendous amount of harm to its reputation with committee members and the Authority Associations, who will view any further proposals and suggestions with grave distrust.

The *Assistant Librarian* has not been fair in its presentation of the facts. I hope this letter may serve to redress the balance slightly.

R. G. BENJAMIN,
Librarian, Tyldesley P.L.

Unlike the writer of the Editorial in the November *Assistant Librarian*, I am not "confident" that the issues involved in the L.A. Council motion have been "fairly placed" before assistants. I cannot recall any full statement of *both sides* of the case, and I am certain that the directives which were sent to assistants by the Divisions did not advise them to abstain from using their postal vote if they "did not fully understand the issues involved."

Mr. W. G. Smith's report of the A.G.M. is tinged with the same unfortunate bias. Whatever the pros and cons of this contentious motion, it is certain that Mr. Smith's sneering reference to "small town councillors" is but another example of the manner in which the small authorities have been denigrated by the uninformed. These democratically elected "small town councillors" know far more about Mr. J. C. Harrison's "rational service units" than does Mr. Smith.

They know, for example, that the spate of post-war legislation which has consistently robbed the County District Councils of their former functions constitutes the greatest threat to local self-government that this country has ever known.

In place of the former local County District control we now have a web of *ad hoc* regionalism, which is a body blow against the democratic principle of local public accountability. Paradoxically, these new *ad hoc* authorities enjoy more freedom than the elected District Councils! Even in those cases where functions have been transferred only as far as the County Councils there is a growing demand for the return of at least the "human" services, e.g. education and health to the County Districts, either by means of extended delegation schemes or by a system of reorganised County District areas. In any event, it is certain that local control of certain services—of which the public library surely is one example—should be preserved, and this principle was recognised in the 1947 Report of the Local Government Boundary Commission and the 1951 Report of the Local Government Manpower Committee.

I need not attempt to describe the practical "advantages" which await the County Districts if their library services are added to the long list of transferred functions. Mr. G. F. Foster, Borough Librarian of Ashton-under-Lyne has done this admirably in a letter published in the *Book-seller* of 5th November, 1955. Moreover, until we know more about the administrative arrangements of the suggested "joint services," who can blame the small authorities for rejecting this part of the motion also? Professor Robson states that "no opportunity for co-operation in municipal affairs is likely to be used on a widespread scale unless it includes legal powers of enforcement and some machinery for supervision by a central government department. . . ." This sort of thing might please the planners in our midst, but

the County District Councils know only too well what it means.

During the A.G.M. we were urged to cast our eyes in the direction of the Blackpool Tower, which we were led to believe symbolised the recalcitrant attitude of the small authorities at the 1946 Conference. Surely subsequent events in local government have proved that they were in fact right, or must we all eventually succumb to the bureaucratic mind?

PAUL SYKES,

Deputy Librarian, Warrington P.L.

✓ TYPOGRAPHY.

The *Assistant Librarian* is always interesting to read, and our eyes are apt to examine even its remoter corners. Perhaps the printer could be persuaded to be a little more considerate towards harassed bibliography students in his colophon. The italic line in the heading is surely not set in Perpetua?

ANGUS DUNN,

Assistant, Brentford and Chiswick P.L.

[Mr. Dunn prompts the warning that the statement at the foot of our back cover, though true as far as it goes, does not purport to be a full typographical description. Subsidiary matter in the headings is not always in Perpetua, and other faces than Times Roman are sometimes used in the text. Students of bibliography will surely be the first to spot such variations.—Hon. Ed.].

LIBRARY SCHOOLS.

Miss Catharine Halls' otherwise useful account of the School of Librarianship, University College, is marred by a series of misleading statements.

To ensure that her opening sentence is not misunderstood by graduates, it must be made clear that the London school is *not* "the only school of librarianship in England to give a post-graduate training in librarianship." In fact, graduates of a *high standard* are welcomed at other schools, and in several, amount to about one-third of the average annual intake.

THE
THURLOE
SERIES

*of special library
editions——ideal
for travelling
libraries*

Arts and Crafts
Cycling Tourist Guides
Electrical
Engineering
Gardening
Pets and Livestock
Modelling, etc.
Modelling, Railways
Photography
Wireless and
Television
Juveniles and
Elementary Readers

*Catalogues and Samples on
request*

OPPENHEIM & Co. Ltd.

*Library and Wholesale
Booksellers*

25, THURLOE STREET,
SOUTH KENSINGTON,
LONDON, S.W.7.

Telephone :
Kensington 6807 & 9431

THE
HOLT-JACKSON
BOOK COMPANY
LIMITED



*Public and County
Library Booksellers*



MONTAUBAN
CHAMBERS,
ST. ANNES-ON-SEA,
LANCS.

Telephone: St. Annes 575



London Showroom:
59, BRITTON STREET,
CLERKENWELL ROAD, E.C.1
Telephone: Clerkenwell 3250.

Rightly or wrongly, the London Diploma exempts from three out of four parts of the L.A. Final. Having mentioned this, it is hardly fair of Miss Halls to ignore the Final examination in her detailed comparison. The fact that it is ignored results in the statement that there is no parallel in the L.A. syllabus, to the History and Theory of Librarianship, and to the suggestion that Historical Bibliography is confined to the main Bibliography paper.

There is nothing remarkable about the London requirement that students of Bibliography should make intensive study of two selected subject fields.

The Senior Examiner in Registration B (V) has placed on record his policy which definitely demands such study.

The fact is that if the L.A. syllabus, Registration and Final, is taken as a whole, and related to two years of study at a library school, the result is a programme both as thorough in its stress "upon a wider academic background" and more comprehensive of the major administrative problems of librarianship.

P. M. WHITEMAN,

Assistant Lecturer, Leeds School of Librarianship.

BACKWARDS OR FORWARDS ?

Some extracts from the "Newark Advertiser," dated 5th October, 1955.

Suggestion that, if the Library Association persist with its proposal that the libraries of small authorities should be put under county control, Newark Corporation should withdraw from membership and help to form a rival association was made at the Town Council's meeting on Monday.

As exclusively reported in the "Newark Advertiser" on September 21, the Library Association council recommended that all Councils with rateable values of less than £300,000—Newark's is about £150,000—should hand over their libraries to the County Councils.

This recommendation, due in large measure to the intervention at the last minute of the chairman of the Newark Gilstrap Library Committee, Mr. R. P. Blatherwick, J.P., was rejected at the Association's conference—though it was decided that there should be a postal vote on the issue by all members of the Association.

Tributes were paid to Mr. Blatherwick's action on Monday, when the Committee reported to the Town Council that it had resolved to oppose the Association's recommendation.

Councillor L. Heaton (Con., South) said he was sure the whole Council

would support the action taken by the committee—and would appreciate the promptness with which it was taken.

"But I think some more positive action might be taken," he said. "We could make it quite clear to the powers that be, whether the Council of this Library Association—which I presume to be only an advisory body—or anybody else, that under no circumstances are we prepared to sit down and allow this library to be taken out of local control."

"If it would do any good, I would suggest withdrawing from this association and setting up among all the non-county boroughs an amalgamation in opposition to it." . . .

* * *

If a library assistant helps to clean out the building during the caretaker's annual holiday, should she be paid overtime as a library assistant or as a caretaker?

The question was posed at Newark Town Council's meeting on Monday, when several members attacked the Finance Committee's decision that instead of an "acknowledgement" of £3 to the assistant who undertook the extra work, overtime at the proper rate should be paid. . . .